WHEREAS, Jesus called people to live in accordance with the Great Commandment to love God and neighbor (Matt. 22:36-40), and exhorted his followers to love their enemies (Matt. 5: 44). When we love our enemies, we create the possibility of their becoming our friends. Jesus called his disciples his friends and urged them to risk everything for their friends (John 15:12-17); and

WHEREAS, Paul taught that we are to “…live peaceably with all…” (Romans 12:18) and to “…be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good…” (Romans 12:21) and in accord with what our biblical heritage teaches, we must find solutions that respect human rights and life, generate mutual respect and accountability, and lead to genuine peace in the face of dangerous situations and hostile governments; and

WHEREAS, the word “axis” has long been used to identify pivotal places and moments where the transformative and revelatory presence of sacred power touches life, such as a mountain, column of smoke or fire, steeple, minaret, pagoda, great tree, or person (e.g., axis mundi = turning point of the world);¹ and

WHEREAS, the September 11th tragedy in the United States brought an outpouring of sympathy from all over the world. Throughout Europe, churches on September 12 rang their bells as people held a minute of silence at noon. The world’s sympathy came from places, as far off as Tehran, Iran, where thousands of Iranians lit candles and stood in silence in the streets of the city in solidarity with the people of the United States;² and

WHEREAS, this spontaneous goodwill still has potential to be a transformative power for interfaith and cross-cultural understanding throughout the world and among the diverse peoples of the United States and Canada, an important axis of friendship. Such friendship is a better and more lasting basis for both international cooperation against terrorism and diplomatic means for solving international conflicts;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 29-August 2, 2009, affirm its commitment to diplomacy for resolving conflicts and urges the governments of the United States and Canada to pursue the path of diplomacy and nonviolence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this General Assembly encourages congregations to promote and work for an axis of friendship among the people of the United States and

¹ Mircea Eliade (tr. Philip Mairet), Symbolism of the Centre’ in Images and Symbols, Princeton, 1991.
Canada and other countries, in specific by embracing opportunities for citizen exchanges offered by Global Ministries; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that this Assembly encourages congregations to celebrate and participate in Axis of Friendship Day by:

1. Encouraging all its members to light a candle for the Axis of Friendship in their windows on the evening of September 12 every year.

2. Holding special services of candle-lighting and peace in local churches.

3. Helping congregations celebrate the Axis of Friendship with festivals in their local areas, based in promoting interfaith and cross-cultural understanding among the many diverse nationalities, religions, and cultures found in our own neighborhoods.

4. Requesting the Common Global Ministries staff to inform all our global partners of this action and to explore with them possible similar commemoration(s).

5. Encouraging joint events and services that honor the Axis of Friendship with other important commemorations of cross-cultural friendship and peace, such as Light a Candle for Children.

First Christian Church, Oakland, CA
Park Avenue Christian Church, New York, NY

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT Business Item No. 0915. (Debate time: 12 minutes)
NO. 0916

(OPERATIONAL BUSINESS ITEM)

RESOLUTION: BE A GLOBAL MISSION CHURCH

WHEREAS, throughout the past two centuries, for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ, global presence and witness have been the core of God’s mission through the church; and

WHEREAS, since 1996 Global Ministries has been a unique common witness of the Division of Overseas Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and of Wider Church Ministries, United Church of Christ; and

WHEREAS, Global Ministries continues to walk with 270 global partners in some 68 countries discerning together priorities of critical presence and action with the sole purpose of timely and appropriately meeting God’s people and creation at the point of deepest need: spiritually, physically, emotionally and/or economically; and

WHEREAS, in keeping that critical presence priority, over 150 persons in mission are currently serving as missionaries, volunteers, interns and associates in 50 countries, and missionaries sent by our global partners are welcomed to serve in the United States and Canada in fulfillment of our commitment to mutuality in mission; and

WHEREAS, a congregation engaged in ministry globally is a vital and faithful church, one that is dynamic and growing in strong local and global relationships, bringing abundant blessings, creating understanding and building communities of justice and service; and

WHEREAS, Global Ministries seeks to facilitate the engagement of congregations and other expressions of the church more intentionally in global mission; and

WHEREAS, God’s call to mission is already embodied and celebrated in all expressions of the church in relationships, service, mission presence, justice witness, worship and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, partnership means receiving the gifts and learning from the experiences of others in our world, building greater effectiveness through collective efforts and mutually recognizing and encouraging each other in ministry; and

WHEREAS, God’s mission imperative for the Church is to be evangelical, to share the Good News (Gk. “evangel”) of Jesus Christ, witnessing, loving, and serving from our doorsteps “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8) so “that they may all be one” (John 17:21); and

WHEREAS, in 2001 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) identified four priorities for the church (the formation of 1,000 new congregations; the transformation of 1,000 current congregations; the
calling and forming of new leaders and the continuing re-forming of current leaders; becoming an anti-racist/pro-reconciling church), none of which address mission beyond the national boundaries of the United States and Canada; and

WHEREAS, we are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world, who participate in God's mission for the world, working with partners to heal the brokenness of creation and bring justice and peace to the whole human family;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana July 29-August 2, 2009 claims the church’s core identity as a global mission church in all of its expressions, and calls on the church to live out this commitment in all current and future mission priorities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly calls upon congregations and regions to implement the Global Mission Church process as detailed in the Be a Global Mission Church program materials from Global Ministries; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that congregations as well as regions seeking the designation “Global Mission Congregation” or “Global Mission Region” be encouraged to study, explore, and live out that commitment by:

  - **praying** regularly for partners, missionaries and the world,
  - **educating** its members from preschool to adult about global issues,
  - **seeking** justice for the “least of these” in the international community,
  - **receiving** the gifts of the worldwide Church,
  - **giving** to the work of global mission through Disciples Mission Fund and “over and above” gifts,
  - **sending** its members into the world to share the Good News,
  - **growing** in sharing the story of God’s mission with others; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly calls for a commitment to hear the cries of people around the world; to find the energy and enthusiasm to reach out and respond with grace; to proclaim the joys as well as denounce the suffering of God’s people; to seek wisdom and guidance in building global connections in the life of all settings of the church; to be immersed in the church’s work for the healing of the nations.

Division of Overseas Ministries

[A resolution of the Common Global Ministries Board, through the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to the General Assembly in 2009.]

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
ADOPT Business Item No. 0916. (Debate time: 24 minutes)
NO. 0917

(OPERATIONAL BUSINESS ITEM)

CELEBRATE AND REAFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT TOWARD
THE VISION OF CHURCH PLANTING

WHEREAS, the Biblical witness of scripture calls us toward “making disciples” in the
Great Commission, the Great Commandment, and in the practice of the early church as
it spread throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, the historical record of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
demonstrates a practice of spreading the gospel through the formation and adoption of
new congregations since our very inception; and

WHEREAS, our formative documents within our church demonstrate a long-term
commitment to evangelism and acceptance of the mantle of “…our mission of witness
and service to all people”; and

WHEREAS, our church has adopted a vision of being a “faithful, growing church, that
demonstrates true community, deep Christian Spirituality and a passion for Justice”
(Micah 6:8); and

WHEREAS, we have adopted our Mission “To be and to share the Good News of Jesus
Christ, witnessing, loving and serving from our doorsteps “to the ends of the earth”
(Acts 1:8); and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has adopted the 2020 vision of establishing 1,000 new
congregations by the year 2020; and

WHEREAS, we have repeatedly reaffirmed our commitment toward establishing new
Disciples congregations in General Assemblies since 1969; and

WHEREAS, Disciples celebrate the planting of more than 600 new and affiliating
congregations since 2001 with more than 80 percent of these congregations chartered
or still in formation; and

WHEREAS, Disciples new congregations represent tremendous growth in the
racial/ethnic diversity of our church, allowing Disciples to look more reflective of the
face of America; and

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1 The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
2 The Mission Imperative of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
3 The Mission Imperative of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
WHEREAS, Disciples have depended on the service and commitment of more than 600 new church pastors, who have sacrificed personally in the establishment of these new congregations with little financial backing from denominational sources; and

WHEREAS, Disciples have supported new congregations by an average of only $3,500 per congregation each year through our offerings and Regional support, with only half of all existing Disciple congregations supporting the Pentecost offering; and

WHEREAS, new congregations of the past 20 years represent the most growth and giving towards our common mission fund and the greatest number of new additions and baptisms of all our congregations⁴; and

WHEREAS, there are still four states in the United States without a Disciples congregation and 25 metropolitan areas in North America that do not have a Disciples presence⁵; and

WHEREAS, sixty-five percent of the U.S. population still does not live near a Disciples congregation⁶;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) celebrates at this assembly that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has welcomed more than 600 new and affiliating congregations that are listed in this docket; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that this assembly will encourage the church to fulfill its long-term mission – not only in word, but in deed – to form more congregations through financial support, congregationally initiated projects, the recruitment and training of gifted planters, and prayerful support of robust Disciples church planting.

New Church Ministry

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT Business Item No. 0917. (Debate time: 12 minutes)

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⁴ The Yearbook
⁵ The Yearbook
⁶ PERCEPT
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NO. 0918

(OPERATIONAL BUSINESS ITEM)

CHANGING THE MEETING TIME OF GENERAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Denver, Colorado, July 25-29, 1997, voted to hold only summer General Assemblies in order to include more children, youth, young adults, families and lay persons; and

WHEREAS, the 2001 Summer Assembly experienced a 3% decline in participation from that in 1997, the 2005 Summer Assembly experienced a 32% decline in participation from that in 1997 and the 2007 Summer Assembly experienced a 27% decline in participation from that in 1997 (based on Yearbook figures); and

WHEREAS, the Mission Imperatives of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) adopted in July 2000 include our covenant that affirms our need to “strengthen relationships among all manifestations of the church, [and] share mutually and more fully the stewardship of God’s gifts of our life in Christ”; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 Vision of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) includes “The calling and forming of new leaders and the continuing re-forming of current leaders”; and

WHEREAS, having a summer General Assembly every other year has a significant negative impact on the Regional summer camp and conference programs that historically have developed our children, youth, and young adults as Disciples and leaders in the Church; and

WHEREAS, having alternating summer and fall General Assemblies would allow youth to participate in a General Assembly once in their high school careers without missing school; and

WHEREAS, alternating fall and summer General Assemblies would require Regions to plan their camp and conference programs around the General Assembly only once every four years, making staffing and scheduling less difficult in the other years;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in assembly in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 25-29, 2009, declare that beginning in 2013 or as soon as practical thereafter, the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will alternate between summer and fall Assemblies.

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Montana
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kansas
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Upper Midwest
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Virginia

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
NOT ADOPT Business Item No. 0918. (Debate time: 24 minutes)
WHEREAS, Disciples founder Barton Stone, who insisted that “unity is our polar star,” also declared, “Nothing appears so repugnant to the kingdom of heaven as war;” and

WHEREAS, Disciples founder Alexander Campbell taught that the church is the “one Christian Nation composed of all the Christian communities and individuals in the whole earth” and insisted that when Christians of differing countries fight each other in war this sets Christ’s kingdom against itself; and

WHEREAS, J. W. McGarvey long time professor and president of Lexington Theological Seminary – then College of the Bible – appalled at the prospect of Christians killing each other in war, declared, “I would rather, ten thousand times, be killed for refusing to fight, than to fall in battle, or to come home victorious with the blood of my brethren on my hands;” and

WHEREAS, Disciples of Christ leader and pioneer of the ecumenical movement Peter Ainslie proclaimed that war offers “the most spectacular display” of the divided church’s “false interpretation of religion;” and

WHEREAS, Disciples of Christ throughout our history have affirmed the unity of the church as a sign of the wholeness of the human family and that war represents the greatest rupture between humans and communities; and

WHEREAS, Disciples of Christ have not always made explicit the intimate connection between our commitment to Christian unity and our opposition to war as part of our larger witness in working for peace;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Indianapolis, IN July 29-Aug 2, 2009 affirms the conviction of those forebears who saw that the pursuit of Christian unity entails the repudiation of war; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly acknowledges that an expression of our pursuit of Christian unity, the Disciples of Christ have a strong tradition of opposing war; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that this Assembly strongly urge Disciples as they work and give leadership in ecumenical bodies to highlight peacemaking as an expression of Christian unity.
The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
REFER Business Item No. 0919 to the Council on Christian Unity
to work with Disciples Peace Fellowship in further investigation.
(Debate time: 24 minutes)

Rationale for recommendation:

- To allow for further discussion about the Disciples tradition of individual discernment.
- To allow for the development of the resolution as a pastoral message to the whole church.
- To allow for further discussion about the term “war” as it is used in modern contexts.
- To allow for further reflection about the historic Disciples’ position concerning unity, peace and justice.
NO. 0920

(OPERATIONAL BUSINESS ITEM)

RENEWING DISCIPLES SUPPORT FOR FARMWORKER MINISTRY

WHEREAS, over two million migrant and seasonal farm workers labor in the fields, orchards, vineyards and groves of America; and

WHEREAS, the average wage for migrant and seasonal farm workers in the United States is $11,000. The great majority lack health insurance and all other simple protections enjoyed by most other workers; and

WHEREAS, their labor is vital, since their work provides the food we eat daily; and

WHEREAS, migrant and seasonal farm workers face many dangers and have many needs. They often suffer poisoning from toxic chemicals, pesticides and herbicides. Pregnant women have been known to give birth in the fields while working. Some workers have died from heat, exhaustion and dehydration. Small children must often accompany their parents in the field. Workers often endure insult, harassment and abuse of many kinds from labor contractors, employers and crew bosses; and

WHEREAS, Christians are instructed by scripture and the teachings of our faith to have compassion for the poor and oppressed; and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has a tradition of more than eighty years of support for migrant and seasonal farm workers through the National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM), an organization comprised of more than thirty denominations; and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) needs to resume our ministry of justice with migrant and seasonal farm workers that was halted in 1994 due to declining budgetary resources; and

WHEREAS, the Disciples Home Missions (DHM) in recent years has provided assistance in the development of a new organization (the Disciples Farm Worker Ministry – DFWM) and has given encouragement in the effort to resume Disciples participation with the wider interdenominational community working together through the National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) renew its relationship with the National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM), thus renewing a Disciples commitment to work with other Christians in this ministry of justice with migrant and seasonal farm workers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) resume its support for migrant and seasonal farm workers through the new organization known as Disciples Farm
Worker Ministry (DFWM), affiliated with the Disciples Home Missions (DHM); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DFWM develop a program of support and participation in the work of the NFWM; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DFWM designate a person or persons to represent the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with the Board of the NFWM; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DFWM recruit and enlist persons from Disciple congregations to be participating members of DFWM; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DFWM provide information about farm workers for the purpose of educating and engaging concerned individuals and churches with the needs and activities of farm workers; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the DFWM establish a budget for its work seeking funds to support the work of its ministry. All funds will be received through DHM for appropriate accountability of reporting and expending.

Compton Heights Christian Church, St. Louis, Missouri
Downey Avenue Christian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana

BACKGROUND

There are over two million farm workers in the United States who labor in our fields and orchards, dairies and feedlots. Without them, our multi-billion dollar agricultural industry would not survive; 85 percent of our fruits and vegetables are still handpicked. Yet farm workers annual wages are only $11,000, with some workers making much less. Workers often pick for “piece rate” still earning only 45 cents per 32 lb bucket of tomatoes, or 85 cents per 90 lb sack of oranges. The majority receive no health benefits, overtime pay, or sick leave. Thousands of workers experience pesticide related illnesses every year and suffer other unhealthy and unsanitary conditions in the fields, even dying in the fields from heat exposure. Women frequently suffer sexual harassment. Most farm workers are immigrants and many lack legal status, leaving them vulnerable to being fired or deported if they complain about abuses.

Churches have worked cooperatively with farm workers for over 80 years, first as state based ministries, providing food, clothing, daycare and worship services to workers. When Cesar Chavez, founder of the United Farm Workers, began organizing in the 1960’s he called on the church to move from charity to justice, to support their organizing efforts for empowerment and justice in the fields – for the means to buy their own food and clothes. In 1971, the National Farm Workers Ministry (NFWM) was founded as the vehicle for national denominations, regional religious bodies, religious orders, and concerned individuals to respond to that call. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was a founding member of NFWM.
While supporting important legislative and regulatory efforts led by farm workers, such as the right to shade and drinking water in extreme heat, the biggest improvements in farm worker working conditions have come about through labor agreements. National Farm Worker Ministry’s 36 years of service with farm workers has convinced them that such agreements are the workers’ best hope for real change in the fields, enabling enforcement of laws and regulations within the industry, making it possible for workers to speak up without fear of being fired.

Under the leadership of Arturo Rodriguez, Cesar Chavez’s successor as President of the United Farm Workers (UFW), the UFW won contracts over the last ten years with: the nation’s largest strawberry employer, Coastal Berry Company; a major rose company, Jackson and Perkins; the D’Arrigo company, employing over 1800 workers who pick lettuce, broccoli and other vegetables; the majority of California’s mushroom companies; and several others. They also won contracts with Chateau St. Michelle, Washington’s largest winery and have successfully renegotiated that three times. The UFW also won the largest contract for farm workers in Oregon history covering three hundred workers at the mega-dairy Threemile Canyon Farms. These agreements provide workers not only with improved pay and working conditions, such as toilets and clean drinking water in the fields, but also with a pension plan, sick and vacation days, health benefits, and perhaps most importantly, a seniority system and grievance procedure to address problems on the job.

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) under the leadership of Baldemar Velasquez won the first union contract for farm workers in North Carolina and the first contract covering H2-A guest workers. Some 7,000 cucumber, sweet potato and tobacco pickers won protections under the landmark agreement with the North Carolina Growers Association and Mt. Olive Pickle Company in 2004; that contract was extended in 2008. Among the contract provisions the “guest workers” won a right to bereavement leave to return home for a death in the family. The contract has also helped prevent further death in North Carolina’s fields where some nine workers died in recent years, some of preventable heat stroke.

In Florida, a community organization known as the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) won historic agreements with Taco Bell, McDonald’s, and Burger King, when the fast food companies agreed to pay a penny more per pound for their tomatoes with the provision that it be passed on to the workers picking their tomatoes. The Coalition was also given a role in enforcing a code of conduct in the fields, particularly related to the indentured servitude that still exists in Florida and elsewhere.

Farm workers were excluded from many of the laws protecting other workers, including the National Labor Relations act, designed to provide workers protections for organizing. Thus they have only won agreements such as those above with public support. The support of the faith community in particular has been critical because of its moral voice, its large constituency, and because its presence offers the workers hope and affirmation for the risks they take.

Farm workers are the first to say that they could not have won what they have without the support of the religious community. But the sad reality is that they apply to a minority of farm workers nationwide; there is much work to be done before we can rest easy at our tables. It is
imperative that people of faith continue to stand by farm workers as they carry on with hope and determination to create a better life for themselves and their families.

THE ROLE OF THE DISCIPLES

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was an active participant in this ministry from the beginning. Individuals from congregations have worked as volunteers with migrants, and our church was among the denominations which founded the National Farm Workers Ministry in 1971. The International Convention and the General Assembly have consistently endorsed and encouraged this ministry with farm workers.

In 1966, the International Convention approved Resolution No. 75 entitled Concerning Economic Justice For Agricultural Workers saying: “... scripture enjoins us to be concerned with justice for the poor, the stranger and the oppressed.” Citing Amos 2:6-8 and 5:21-24, Micah 6:10-15, and James 5:1-6, Resolution No. 75 said: “that this Assembly go on record as supporting the principal of legislation to include farm workers under the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act of the United States and the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act of Canada so that they may form voluntary associations and bargain collectively with their employers; and that this Assembly urges that the permanent church related migrant ministry staffs... be encouraged to solicit the cooperation of local churches and parish clergy to assume their rightful responsibility of farm laborers to achieve dignity and an adequate standard of living....”

In 1973, in Resolution No. 7343, the General Assembly meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio, reaffirmed support for the right of farm workers “... to organize and join a union of their own choosing and to engage in collective bargaining with employers.” and “…that regional offices of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be requested to assist in the task of helping members of churches to understand the issues involved in the right of farm workers to organize for and engage in collective bargaining with employers.”

In 1975, the General Assembly meeting in San Antonio approved Resolution No. 7556 which called on “units, agencies, assemblies, and institutions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to refrain from purchasing or serving iceberg (head lettuce) or table grapes or Gallo wines unless they bear the UFW Aztec eagle label.”

Resolution No. 0314 was approved by the General Assembly meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 2003 calling for express endorsement of the National Farm Worker Ministry and encouraging a Disciples witness and presence in ministry with migrant and seasonal farm workers. The resolution endorsed the boycott of “all Taco Bell restaurants and products (taco shells, sauce, refried beans, etc.) sold in groceries until such time when Taco Bell brings together representatives of Taco Bell, their Florida suppliers and representatives of Immokalee workers to discuss solutions to the needs and rights of immigrant workers.” This boycott was successful in getting Taco Bell to sign an agreement with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) of South Florida which was the first for a fast food company.

Most recently, the General Assembly meeting in Portland, Oregon, in 2005, approved Resolution No. 0517 that called on church members to “…support movements that address the
living wage and cooperate with workers, employers, labor unions, and organizations that are working to affirm workers’ dignity.”

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT Business Item No. 0920. (Debate time: 12 minutes)
WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change defines climate change as follows: “Climate change refers to a statistically significant variation in either the mean state of the climate or in its variability, persisting for an extended period (typically decades or longer). Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use. Note that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in its Article 1, defines “climate change” as: “a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.” The UNFCCC thus makes a distinction between “climate change” attributable to human activities altering the atmospheric composition, and “climate variability” attributable to natural causes.”1; and

WHEREAS, as people of faith, we strive for justice and acknowledge that climate change’s societal impact already falls, and will continue to fall, most heavily on the people around the world who are least able to mitigate the impacts – poor and vulnerable populations in the United States, Canada and in developing countries; and

WHEREAS, as people of faith, we heed the call to be faithful stewards and caretakers of God’s creation by limiting future impacts of climate change on God’s Earth; and

WHEREAS, as people of faith, we want to ensure that efforts to curb climate change prevent further environmental and societal tragedies; and

WHEREAS, in a world of finite resources, for all to have enough requires that those among us who have more than enough will need to address our patterns of acquisition and consumption; and

WHEREAS, we are called by Scripture to acknowledge our place within God’s creation and our responsibility to creation:

The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it ...
Psalm 24:1

... you save humans and animals alike, O Lord.

Psalm 36:6;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana July 29, 2009 – August 2, 2009, encourages all expressions of the church to educate themselves, their communities and their locally and nationally elected officials on the consequences of climate change; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that we Disciples begin to look at our own actions to determine if they are contributing or mitigating factors to climate change and faithfully and conscientiously to act accordingly.

St. Andrew Christian Church, Olathe, Kansas, United States
Church of the Covenant (Disciples-UCC), Lynchburg, Virginia, United States
Summerville Christian Church, Summerville, Nova Scotia, Canada
Milton Christian Church, Milton, Nova Scotia, Canada

Background

The resolution text is based on the set of principles developed by the National Council of Churches in 2008 to outline those elements we need to address if we are to mitigate the worst-case scenarios of global climate change.

The authors of the original principles refer to global warming. In this set of principles, we have opted for the more comprehensive term, climate change. According to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), global warming refers to “the increase in Earth’s average surface temperature due to rising levels of greenhouse gases,” while climate change refers to “a long–term change in the Earth’s climate, or of a region on Earth” and “scientific research on climate change encompasses far more that surface temperature change.”

Statement of Principles

Justice: As people of faith, we strive for justice and acknowledge that climate change’s societal impact already falls, and will continue to fall, most heavily on the people around the world who are least able to mitigate the impacts—poor and vulnerable populations in Canada, the United States, and in developing countries. As a leading industrialized nation that has disproportionately contributed to greenhouse gas emissions, it is incumbent upon us in the United States and Canada to rectify this injustice. To reach our goal of justice, we are called to:

1. Include mechanisms in governmental legislation that mitigate the impacts of climate change particularly for vulnerable populations in Canada, the United States, and abroad.
2. Prevent further harm to human health and all of God’s creation by utilizing clean energy sources when addressing climate change and carbon pollution.
3. Focus on a fair and equitable distribution of total benefits and costs among people, communities, and nations, and in particular rectify the disproportionate impact that low-income communities have and will experience as the climate continues to change.
4. Enable our brothers and sisters now living in poverty to have both economic independence and stability and to eliminate the devastating impacts that climate change has and will continue to have on those people in the United States, Canada, and around the world living in poverty. (According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, climate change is a major contributor to forced displacement.)
5. Take action now to avoid placing the burden of carbon reduction unduly on our children’s children.
6. Endorse policies that place a high priority on allowing all people to live in God’s abundance and with dignity by ensuring that basic human needs and worker justice are not adversely impacted by the effects of climate change or future efforts to address climate change.

**Stewardship:** As people of faith, we heed the call to be faithful stewards and caretakers of God’s creation by limiting the future impacts of climate change on God’s Earth. Already, climate change has damaged the precious balance of God’s creation, including increasing the number of threatened species, causing long-term drought, and melting Arctic ice. To reach our goal of stewardship, we are called to:

1. Follow recognized scientific guidelines and recommendations in order to protect all of God’s creation and prevent catastrophic damage to God’s Earth and God’s people. Following their recommendations, our governmental legislation and our actions should include comprehensive and aggressive emission reductions that aim to limit the increase in Earth’s temperature to 2 degrees Celsius or less. Legislation should focus on the short term goal of reducing U.S. and Canadian carbon emissions to reach a 15 to 20 percent reduction in carbon by 2020 with a long-term vision to achieve carbon emissions that are 80 percent of 2000 levels by the year 2050.
2. Avoid catastrophic climate change, which would devastate God’s creation, make disaster and relief responses more difficult, and endanger the future of the planet. Although climate change impacts are already being felt, we must ensure that God’s people and planet are protected from the catastrophic effects that may occur if we fail to significantly curb our carbon emissions.
3. Hold major emitters responsible for their actions and work to significantly reduce their carbon emissions.
**Sustainability:** As people of faith, we want to ensure that efforts to curb climate change prevent further environmental and societal tragedies. Sustainability requires that we prevent biological and social systems that nurture and support life from being depleted or poisoned. To reach our goal of sustainability, we are called to:

1. Maintain God’s creation by creating governmental policies that sustain and restore vibrant eco-systems with economic justice so that communities of life can flourish for generations to come and abolishing those governmental policies that compromise the integrity of creation.
2. Respond to climate change in a way that reflects the interdependence of all of God’s creation.
3. Support energy sources that are renewable, clean, and not destructive of God’s creation.

**Sufficiency:** In a world of finite resources, for all to have enough requires that those among us who have more than enough will need to address our patterns of acquisition and consumption. As people of faith, we cannot achieve significant reductions in climate change emissions unless we make significant changes in our lifestyles (see the Alverna Covenant at end), particularly in energy consumption. To support the goal of sufficiency, we are called to:

1. Conserve energy in our homes, our communities, and our places of worship.
2. Conserve energy in national transportation and distribution systems and commercial enterprises.
3. Encourage governments to lead through research and example in the practice and implementation of energy conservation.

**The Alverna Covenant**

Whereas:

* God has created the world with finite resources;
* God has given to us the stewardship of the earth;
* God has established order through many natural cycles.

And it is evident that:

* We are consuming resources at a rate that cannot be maintained;
* We are interrupting many natural cycles;
* We are irresponsibly modifying the environment through consumption and pollution;
* We are populating the earth at a rate that cannot be maintained;
As a member of the human family and a follower of Jesus Christ, I hereby covenant that:

* I will change my lifestyle to reduce my contribution to pollution;
* I will support recycling efforts;
* I will search for sustainable lifestyles;
* I will work for public policies which lead to a just and sustainable society;
* I will share these concerns with others and urge them to make this Covenant.

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT Business Item No. 0921. (Debate time: 12 minutes)
Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

WHEREAS, the contexts in which the church finds itself call for fresh attention to the theological foundations and the practical protocols for the ordering of ministry; and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) does not presently have a formal denominational statement that seeks to state the theological foundations for our ordering of ministry, as understood in light of our history and polity; and

WHEREAS, our ability to be clear about our understandings of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) foundations for the ordering of ministry is crucial for conversations with our ecumenical partners in the Body of Christ; and

WHEREAS, the present Licensed constituents of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) through the Nazareth Consensus have responsibly explored with the larger church the manner in which Licensed ministers

a) might be provided a track whereby those with adequate preparation could seek Ordination; and
b) might be afforded more mobility for circulation in Search and Call; and
c) might be designated by a more Biblical nomenclature; and
d) might be valued as partners within the whole order of ministry; and

WHEREAS, a few Regions are already utilizing processes that allow for Ordination without a full Association of Theological Schools (A.T.S.) accredited seminary preparation; and

WHEREAS, a policy and procedure for ministerial credentialing is necessary to address exceptional life situations, including the diverse needs of clergy in the many new church starts we are celebrating in the life of this Communion; and

WHEREAS, the proposed policy:

~ provides a theological foundation for the ordering of ministry that is specific to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);

~ affords a necessary statement that will serve us well in our ecumenical conversation with other Communions in the Body of Christ;

~ responds in an appropriate manner to the Nazareth Consensus by:

a) designating non-Ordained clergy with the more Biblical nomenclature of Commissioned rather then Licensed;
b) creating an Apprentice Track of preparation leading to Ordination without a Master of Divinity degree;

c) affording mobility through Search and Call for Commissioned Ministers who complete the Apprentice Track and are Ordained; and

d) strengthening the recognition of those who serve the church faithfully with this preparation; and

~ recognizes and expands upon those procedures instituted by Regions with alternative paths to Ordination based upon the exceptional life situations, communities, ministry settings, and cultural and ethnic contexts of their ministry candidates;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 29 to August 2, 2009, adopt the document, *Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*, replacing the 1971 *Policies and Criteria For The Order of Ministry* document, which was last revised by the General Assembly in 2003; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the church utilizes the next biennium, August 2009 to August 2011 for a period of implementation. This ordering of ministry will become effective August 1, 2011; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Commission on Ministry convene a task force to develop a template for an Apprentice Track program addressing the competencies in section II. C. 2 of the document; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that General Commission on Ministry will collaboratively work with Regions to:

- develop their own Apprentice Track (AT) program or one in collaboration with Regional Fellowships [cf. section II.C.3., footnote 12 of the document], theological institutions or ecumenical partners;

- share their program design with other regions for networking, feedback and sharing best practices;

- determine how work done in previous Licensed ministry continuing education applies to the Apprentice Track;

- review the status of each current Licensed minister to determine which category of Commissioned Minister is most appropriate; and

- revise as necessary any Regional policies to facilitate this transition; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the present nomenclature be used for clergy until this policy takes effect on August 1, 2011.

General Commission on Ministry
The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT Business Item No. 0922. (Debate time: 24 minutes)
Proposed Amendments

Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Preamble “Within the universal Body of Christ, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is identifiable by its testimony, tradition, name, institutions, and relationships. Across national boundaries, this church expresses itself in covenantal relationships in congregations, Regions, and General ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), bound by God’s covenant of love. Each expression is characterized by its integrity, self-governance, authority, rights, and responsibilities, yet they relate to each other in a covenantal manner, to the end that all expressions will seek God’s will and be faithful to God’s mission.”

~ from paragraph 2 of The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), revised 2005

Draft 11.1 04/21/2009
Preface


Therefore, it will be advantageous and necessary that a reasonable time frame be adopted. The General Commission on Ministry is offering the following:

**Time Frame**

- **2008**
  - Fall: GCOM circulates Draft 9.5 to General Ministries Presidents, Commissions/Committees on Ministry through Regional Ministers, Council on Theological Education and the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform for comment by January 30, 2009.

- **2009**
  - February: GCOM considers changes, modifications to Draft 9.5 and prepares Draft 10 to present to the General Board.
  - April: General Board reviews and takes action on Draft 10.
  - July: General Assembly considers resolution.

- **2009-2011**
  - Period of Implementation

- **2011**
  - August 1: This ordering of ministry takes effect.
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3
I. Theological Foundations for the Ordering of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

PREFACE

Theological Foundations for the Ordering of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) functions interdependently with Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to clarify evolving patterns of ministry as we seek to respond in faithful ways to ever changing contexts of service and witness. It is not a comprehensive theology of ministry nor does it attempt to offer the final word on Disciples’ understanding of ministry.

A. The Ministry of the Whole People of God

God calls all persons to receive the good news of the Gospel and accept their call to be God’s people. In a divided and unbelieving world, those who accept this good news are drawn into the fellowship (koinonia) of a new community, the church. In this body, the Holy Spirit unites those who follow Jesus Christ and sends them as witnesses into the world [ref: I Corinthians 12.12-13; Ephesians 4.4-5; Matthew 28:16-20]. The church’s mission is to proclaim and prefigure the justice and joy of the Realm of God. In order to fulfill this mission faithfully, the members of the Body of Christ are given ministries of witness, service and reconciliation.

The ministry of Christ is entrusted to all the people of God. Through baptism they are called to servant ministry lived out in covenant community. Implicit in the confession of faith and the act of baptism is an acceptance of the vocation of the baptized—the special calling shared by all followers of Christ to witness to the sovereign love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit in all of life. The gifts (charisms) of the Holy Spirit are different and diverse, but in tremendous and simple ways they proclaim the mighty acts of God and mediate God’s loving and reconciling work to and in the world. Every baptized person is called to witness to Christ in whatever situation he or she lives—to express in their daily lives the ministry of Christ.

In Christ the individual becomes a member of “a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of God’s own possession” (1Peter 2:9). Thus it has been common to speak of the
“priesthood of all believers”\(^1\)—the persons who live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ in the church and in the world. This language highlights the sacramentality of the work of the laity through whose witness and service the grace of God is made manifest.

The ministry of God’s people (the laos— the Greek term used in the New Testament for “people,” which is the source of our English words “laity, laywomen, laymen”), taken as a whole and in its diverse individual expressions, is to manifest and so continue the saving ministry of Jesus Christ. This ministry includes all who join together in witness to God’s justice and reconciliation through worship, daily work, sharing the Gospel, pastoral care, relief of human suffering, engagement in the struggle for peace and justice, and realization of the unity of the Church Universal. It is within this context of a shared ministry of the people of God that Commissioned ministry and Ordained ministry is to be understood.

Within the ministry of the whole people of God there is, and has been since the early church, representative ministry called by God and set apart by the Church for distinctive functions. The Commissioned and the Ordained are both of the laos, but in recognizing God’s call to particular individuals, the Church designates persons “to re-present to the Church its own identity and calling in Jesus Christ” (The Nature of the Church, A Word to the Church on Ministry). Authority and blessing to perform this ministry are celebrated in Ordination and Commissioning.

B. Historical Survey of Disciples Ministry

Alexander Campbell and Barton Warren Stone relied on the Bible, especially the New Testament, as the only rule of faith and practice. This premise shaped their understandings of ministry in its many expressions.

Campbell’s attitudes on ministry progressed as the movement grew and the changing circumstances of the church demanded new approaches to and appropriations of leadership. Conversely, Stone’s attitudes on ministry remained relatively consistent.

\(^1\) The “priesthood of all believers” refers to the persons who have entered into a covenanted relationship through confession and baptism. It ought not be confused with the role of congregational elders in the administration of the Lord’s Supper. Although in some circumstances anyone can administer the Sacraments/Ordinances of the Church, in Disciples practice it has usually been the duly appointed congregational leaders who administer baptism and the Lord’s Supper. This practice derives not from the “priesthood of all believers” but from early distinctions between the roles of elder and evangelist/preacher. The evangelist, called from outside the congregation, was restricted to ministries of preaching/teaching. The elder(s), called from within the congregation, bore responsibility for congregational governance, including the administration of baptism and the Lord’s Supper. The right and responsibility to preside at the Table is increasingly a role shared by Elders and ministers.
While he promoted freedom from ecclesiastical control, he retained a sense of order in ministry and structure. One notable point of agreement between the two is that both regarded ministry as servanthood even though the forms and functions of that ministry were expressed and authorized in different ways.

**Alexander Campbell**

Although Alexander Campbell was staunchly anti-clerical, he was clearly pro-ministry. This position was elaborated throughout various pages of the *Christian Baptist* in the 1820s to 1830. The clergy of the day represented for Campbell a class that he could only term self-serving and pompous, promoting a specific set of sectarian or denominational tenets in place of the gospel. His opposition was to a professional clergy—indeed of the local congregation, and accountable only to itself—not to the exercise of ministry which he considered essential to the life of the Church:

Campbell developed a specific formula for the church’s ministry, quite apart from what others might consider the roles of the clergy:

1. Establish necessary offices for perpetuity and growth
2. Select the best qualified persons for those offices
3. Consecrate or set apart those persons for those offices
4. Give oneself completely to the work and continue growing so that everyone can see the growth.

In *The Christian System* he outlined:

The standing and immutable ministry of the Christian community is composed of Bishops [Elders], Deacons, and Evangelists. Of each of these there is but one order, though possessing great diversities of gifts. There have been bishops, deacons, and evangelists, with both ordinary and extraordinary gifts. (CS, 82-3)

Campbell argued from Ephesians 4.12, “the work of ministry [is] for the edifying of the body of Christ.” Bishops, deacons and evangelists each had a distinctive role or function on behalf of the Body: Bishops engaged in ministries of oversight; Deacons in ministries of service; and, Evangelists in ministries of proclamation.

From Campbell’s perspective in this early period, the movement of ministers from church to church was unacceptable. Appointed from a particular congregation, the leader stayed and served in that congregation or lost credentials.3

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2 Bishop and Elder are alternate translations of the Greek word *episkopos*.

3 In an 1835 edition of the *Millennial Harbinger*, Campbell wrote: “The jurisdiction of such bishops [elders] is always circumscribed by the congregation which ordained them. A single church is the largest dioceses (sic) known in the New Testament. Neither does his election and ordination give him a perpetual office. Should he leave the church, which under the direction of the Holy Spirit, created him, and become a member of another church, he enters it as a private member, and so continues until that church elect and ordain him, should they call for his services. The bishops [elders] and deacons of the
As the church grew after the union of the Disciples and Christians in 1832, Campbell was compelled to distinguish between elders of oversight in local congregations and preaching elders who moved from congregation to congregation.

Barton Warren Stone

In an 1831 issue of the *Christian Messenger*, Barton Stone wrote that the pastoral office included “bishops, elders, pastors, and evangelists” (*CM*, 5:7/31, 162). For Stone, the pastoral office was one office with multiple functions, such as: to preach and teach, administer the sacraments/ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and, according to his Presbyterian heritage, provide moral oversight within the congregation, but not from outside it.

Not unlike Campbell, the bishops/elders and pastors, were internal to the congregation while the evangelists were traveling preachers/planters. Although Stone did not specifically identify deacons, a description in the *Christian Messenger* is helpful: “The word *Diakonos* translated *deacon* but commonly, *minister* is frequently applied to all those who minister in the word as well as in other matters” (*CM*, IX:2/35, 45).

As early as the *Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery* (1804), it was willed that: “the church of Christ resume her native right of internal government – try her candidates for ministry, as to their soundness of faith, acquaintance with experimental religion, gravity and aptness to teach; and admit no other proof of their authority but Christ speaking in them.” In an 1827 issue of the *Christian Messenger*, Stone spoke again of candidates for ministry implying that those individuals must have had some sort of Standing or recognition in the church. This reaffirmed his position in the *Last Will and Testament* that the church try its candidates. He further argued that only Licensed preachers and Ordained elders were empowered to preach, giving rise to his notion of “pastor.” He evoked a strong Pauline tendency here in that preachers should not wander about the countryside in a freelance manner, but be sent from the churches with letters of commendation (*CM*, 1:2/27, 80).

Stone lifted up the pastoral office by identifying not only the functions but the authorization. He makes a distinction between choosing or appointing to an office and Ordaining to an office. (*CM*, IX: 2/35, 45) Through Acts and the Pastoral Epistles, he contends “…that Ordination to the work of ministry was performed by the [imposition] of the hands of the elders in the New Testament church. – Therefore it appears that no person can be legally inducted into the ministry without this act” (Ibid, 46).

church in Philippi were the bishops [elders] and deacons of the church in Philippi and of no other church; and so of Ephesus, Antioch, Rome, and Jerusalem.”(*MH*, VIII:10/35, 503)
When queried on the form of Ordination, Campbell, like Stone, responded “Imposition of hands, accompanied with fasting and prayer. Thus have persons been consecrated to sacred offices in the Christian church from the beginning.” And then the question, “Who may, or who ought to lay hands on the bishops, or deacons, or messengers elect? I answer, without dubiety, and in a few words, The community, the whole community as may be approved in behalf of the congregation.” (MH, VIII:10/35,498)

A significant departure from Campbell’s position, however, was the authority to Ordain. While Campbell had the congregation appoint and Ordain, Stone had the congregation appoint to the pastoral office but a conference or college of ministers, already Ordained, was the Ordaining body.

Later Views

The search for Ordained ministers from outside the congregational membership addressed some of the leadership problems created by the rapid growth of the churches in the 1840s and 50s. There were times when it was determined that qualified persons simply were not available from within the churches. Young men educated in colleges and even seminaries were beginning to be called to settled ministries. The evangelists, too, were well known and seen as a ready and important pool for resident preachers.

The turn of the 20th century saw a variety of new issues for the Disciples that began to shape understandings of the ordering of ministry. At the 1935 San Antonio International Convention, a Commission on Ordination was appointed. In 1939, the Richmond International Convention approved a new system which called for Ordination councils comprising ministers and elders representing three or more congregations to, in Stone’s words, “try her candidates.” Announced still as a local church matter, this new approach more fully satisfied Stone’s system of Ordinations being conducted by a conference or college of ministers. Such a system began to afford broader church ownership and accountability as ministers moved from congregation to congregation. In effect, the convention was following the example of Black Disciples in North Carolina who had already determined in 1886 that Ordination should not be authorized by a local congregation acting alone and had adopted standards for evaluating candidates for ministry. Some local congregations continued to Ordain their candidates without consultation of supporting churches or state societies, but those were becoming more rare in light of emerging covenantal relationships. At the 1964 Detroit International Convention, the church formally recommended a seminary degree prior to Ordination, even though some state societies and congregations had been enforcing that educational requirement for many years.

Origins of Licensed Ministry

The 1939 Richmond report commended three criteria for Ordination:
1. Good moral character and personal fitness for ministry
2. A full college course, and if possible, graduate training in religion
3. Experience in Christian work which shows real leadership, vision, pastoral qualities, and preaching ability

Persons who fulfilled points 1 and 3 but not point 2 were accorded Licenses - a new category of ministry created from the Ordination report.

Licensed ministry, as we conceive it today, is fairly recent in Disciples history. Barton Stone was Licensed by the Orange Presbytery of North Carolina as a missionary to the lower North Carolina area. Alexander Campbell was Licensed to preach at the Brush Run Meeting House in 1811. During the Stone-Campbell era, “licensing to preach” was a trial period prior to Ordination to see if the candidate had the disposition for ministry and the qualities for preaching the true gospel without any mixture of human philosophy, deceit, or rudiments of the world (cf Last Will and Testament).

In 1948 the church recognized a licensing process which defined certification for a limited period of time, primarily for college students in preparation or candidacy and for “those laymen who desire to serve as part-time ministers” (“License and Ordination of the Christian Minister,” 1948, para.16). Among the primary beneficiaries were small churches that were unable to attract or support full-time ministers. This established a standard of a two-fold office that was incorporated into The Design for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in 1968 and the Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in 1971.

Emerging Practice at the Turn of the Millennium

Toward the end of the 20th century, the trend toward higher educational standards for Ordained ministry reached its peak and patterns of preparation began to diversify. Some Regions determined that a single model of ministerial formation was too restrictive to serve faithfully the changing contexts of ministry. A few began to utilize criteria that allowed for the Ordination of ministers without a Master of Divinity degree from an Association of Theological Schools (ATS) accredited seminary. The emergence of these de facto alternate educational tracks led to calls for a review of expectations with an eye toward developing a new consensus on educational standards for Ordained ministry.

C. Ministry in the Congregation

It is the usual practice among congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to nominate, elect, and install or in other ways recognize for service deacons and elders. Women and men serving in these offices manifest various spiritual gifts, including maturity, prayer, insight, and leadership.
The offices of elder and deacon are ordered by the congregations, through election and recognition with appropriate ceremony, for the performance of certain functions of ministry appropriate to the offices.

a. a person elected elder is authorized to exercise within the congregation which elects her or him to the ministerial functions it assigns for periods of time which it specifies, such as sharing in the ministration of baptism and the Lord’s Supper and the conduct of worship, and sharing in the pastoral care and spiritual leadership of the congregation. The eldership is a voluntary ministry, each congregation having a plurality of elders [more than one elder].

b. a person elected deacon is authorized to serve in the congregation which elects her or him for periods of time which it specifies by assisting in the ministration of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, in the conduct of worship, and in the pastoral care and spiritual leadership of the congregation. The diaconate is a voluntary ministry (paragraph 87, The Design of the Christian Church).

The role of elders and deacons is most evident in the ways these ministries represent the congregation in their communities of faith and in the larger community. For example, elders and deacons are seen visiting persons in hospitals, nursing homes, or with the home-centered. They may also lead congregations in ministries of outreach and social justice.

It is, however, at the Table that the ministry of the congregation comes into view for the gathered community. The pastor and elders as they preside and pray and the deacons as they serve, re-present the whole ministry of the church.

D. Order of Ministry

“The church recognizes an order of ministry, set apart under God, to equip the whole people to fulfill their corporate ministry” (Paragraph 86, Design of the Christian Church).

In its ordering of ministry, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) recognizes a Commissioned ministry and an Ordained ministry. The church expects the women and men it Commissions and Ordains to demonstrate educational qualifications and competencies in several areas of personal integrity and pastoral practice, as well as a clear call to and passion for ministry. The church is called to provide significant Congregational and Regional support for those seeking to serve in ministry, whether Ordained or Commissioned.

The church gives grateful acknowledgment to God who in every age grants to women and men the spiritual gifts necessary for such ministry. In making decisions about whom to Commission or Ordain, the church looks to candidates for:

- the personal, inward call from God, which leads persons to seek such ministry,
the God-given gifts and graces,
the personal characteristics and aptitudes, and
the preparation and promise (e.g., education, skills, etc.) that they have for effective ministry.

By these criteria the church discerns whom it will Commission and/or Ordain.4

It bears reiteration that throughout history, Disciples have recognized various methods of preparation for ministry. Over the course of the 20th century, Disciples placed increasing emphasis on a graduate seminary degree as a credential for Ordination, even while recognizing that for some individuals other methods of preparation might be more appropriate in consideration of certain circumstances such as life situation, community, ministry setting, and cultural and ethnic context.

1. Commissioned Ministry

In the development of Disciples understanding of ministry, “Commissioned” ministry is replacing some forms of “Licensed” ministry. Men and women are authorized and Commissioned by their Regions to offer ministry in a particular place for a specified period of time. “The word ‘Commissioned’ means one who is appointed to a position entrusted with a task, or one who is authorized or sent on behalf of another for a task or proclamation” (The Nazareth Consensus, page 8, para.1).5

The term “Commissioned” contains the word “mission,” which sets the stage for a spiritual expectation. Paul describes himself as one commissioned to preach the gospel as in Col. 1:25: “I became [the church’s] servant according to God’s commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known...” (NRSV). In II Corinthians Paul writes, “But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has commissioned us;...” (II Cor. 1:21, RSV) and again, “For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God’s word; but as men [and women] of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ” (II Cor. 2:17, RSV).

The word “Commissioned” has been used and continues to be used by the church for people appointed to various positions or sent forth to carry God’s message. Thus, the term has ecclesiastical connotations of being entrusted with the tasks of ministry. The use of the term “commission” or “commissioned” in English translations of Paul’s letters has further shaped our understanding of the concept in the contemporary setting.

Commissioning is an acknowledgment by the Church of the gifts of the Spirit in the one commissioned, and a commitment by both the Church and the Commissioned to the

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4 Adapted from A Word to the Church on Ministry (1985), Commission on Theology, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), p 3.
5 A proposal for transformative action by the Dialogue on Licensed Ministry Action Team, July 2004, growing out of the gathering at Barton College in May 2003.
new relationship. Those Commissioned offer their gifts to the Church and commit
themselves to the burden and opportunity of new authority and responsibility. At the
same time, they enter into a collegial relationship with all ministers. By receiving the
Commissioned minister in the act of commissioning, the Church acknowledges the
minister’s call and commits itself to be open to it. This liturgical service occurs in the
context of Congregational worship in partnership with the Region.

2. Ordained Ministry

   a. The meaning of Ordination

In Ordination — through prayers invoking the Holy Spirit and the laying on of
hands — the Church confirms in women and men the call of God, acknowledges
their gifts and graces, and authorizes this ministry in and for the Church.

The act of Ordination by those who are appointed for this ministry attests the
bond of the church with Jesus Christ and the apostolic witness, recalling that it is
the risen Lord who is the true Ordainer and bestows the gift. In Ordaining, the
church, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, provides for the faithful
proclamation of the Gospel and humble service in the name of Christ. The laying
on of hands is the sign of the gift of the Spirit, rendering visible the fact that the
ministry was instituted in the revelation accomplished in Christ, and reminding
the church to look to him as the source of its commission. (“Ministry,” Baptism
Eucharist and Ministry, WCC, para. 40.)

Disciples understand the meaning of Ordination as an action of God and the
community during which the Ordained are strengthened by the Spirit for their
task and are upheld by the acknowledgment and prayers of the congregation.

Ordination sets one apart for leadership in the life and witness of the church.
While the Ordained ministry cannot be reduced to any mere listing of tasks, it
may be identified by leadership with regard to three fundamental aspects of the
church’s life and witness:

(1) acting in servant obedience to God’s commandment of love in self-sacrifice
on behalf of others and in a servant life in the world;

(2) proclaiming the gospel in faithfulness to Jesus Christ by word (teaching and
preaching), by sacrament (Baptism and the Lord’s Supper), and by deed
(mission and service);

(3) overseeing the life of the community in its worship, education, witness,
mission, fellowship, and pastoral nurture through the leading of the Holy
Spirit.
In selecting men and women for Ordination, the church thus seeks to insure that its ministry of service, proclamation, and oversight shall be constantly upheld by its members.

b. The character of Ordained ministry

Disciples accept Ordination as a gift of the Holy Spirit at work in the community of faith. In every service of Ordination we, therefore, seek to witness to at least four aspects of this ordering of ministry:

1) Apostolic Ministry: The Ordained enter the *apostolic ministry*. By this we mean they receive their authority and commission from the risen Christ. The first Christian ministers were the apostles in the New Testament, to whom the living Lord revealed himself and sent "to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Ministers in every generation preach, celebrate, witness, and gather disciples in continuity with those early apostles.

2) Representative Ministry: Ordination witnesses to a *representative ministry*. Those who accept the ministry of the Word, sacrament, and mission are responsible for re-presenting (showing forth) to the world and to all baptized Christians the character of Christ’s ministry and witness. A central task of such representative ministry is personally and publicly to point the church to its dependence on Jesus Christ, who is the source of its faith, mission, and unity.

3) Collegial Ministry: Those who receive Ordination enter a *collegial ministry*. Ministry is inherently a shared responsibility. No minister is independent or autonomous, all seek to teach and work together to express fellowship (koinonia) in support and care for each other. This collegiality relates Ordained and lay persons in common ministry. The ministries of all members of the believing community are complementary, given to one to be supportive of the other. All are to build up the Body of Christ in love. No differences of vocation, function or education should obscure the fact that the one ministry of Christ is shared by the whole people of God. Lay and Ordained are partners together in governance and witness; together they empower the church for effective participation in discovering God's will for all humanity.

4) Universal Ministry: Most appropriately, Ordination is a *rite of the Church Universal*. While Ordination is normally done by a particular denomination, and Standing is limited to a particular communion, the intention is that no one is ever Ordained into a particular denomination or tradition, certainly not into the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Those Ordained are representative ministers of the Church Universal: one, holy, catholic and
apostolic. While we serve with the vision of universality, the Church lives with the pain of a divided ministry. Nevertheless, all ministers are called to point out the community of Jesus Christ, to work to bring new expressions of the one universal Church into being, and to search for forms of unity which the divided churches cannot yet express.  

### c. Offices of the Ordained ministry

The New Testament does not describe a single pattern of ministry which might serve as a blueprint or continuing norm for all future ministry in the Church. In the New Testament there appears rather a variety of forms which existed at different places and times. As the Holy Spirit continued to lead the Church in life, worship and mission, certain elements from this early variety were further developed and became settled into a more universal pattern of ministry (*BEM*, para. 19).

In 1985, the Commission on Theology commended to the whole Church a single order of Ordained ministry which would include three offices.  

This pattern of ministerial leadership corresponds to the three aspects of the church’s life identified as fundamental:  

- **the ministry of service** to church and world (the *diaconate* or deacons), where the active witness and mission of the church as servant is advanced;
- **the ministry of proclamation** by Word and Sacrament (the *presbyterate*, or pastors), where preaching, teaching, and the sacraments/ordinances (Table and Baptism) of the church are lifted up; and,
- **the ministry of oversight** (the *episcopate*, or bishops), where oversight of the community’s life occurs.

Thus, within a single order of Ordained ministry, there can be three distinct offices that are at the same time mutually supportive and interrelated. The

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7 This ordering of ministry appears to be in line with the emerging consensus within the ecumenical movement and is the current pattern accepted by many churches throughout the world, e.g., Anglican, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, and United Churches, and thus appears to offer a strong possibility for wider ecumenical relationships in the future.

8 The nomenclature of *diakonos, presbuteros, and episkopos* is drawn from I Timothy, chapters 3 and 5, which is rendered in the NRSV as deacon, elder, and bishop, respectively.
recognition of these offices does not carry with it any implications of hierarchical structure. The three-fold Ordained ministry, taken as a whole, thus re-presents the fundamental characteristics of ministry shared by all baptized believers. (A Word to the Church on Ministry, pp. 3-4.)

Persons are not Ordained into a particular office, but rather into the order of ministry. The church may call them to a role that emphasizes one of the three offices. However, these offices are not located exclusively in any particular ministerial role. Most ministries encompass varying aspects of all three offices.

d. The act of Ordination

A long and early Christian tradition places Ordination in the context of worship and especially of the Lord’s Supper. Such a place for the service of Ordination preserves the understanding of Ordination as an act of the whole community. The act of Ordination by the laying on of hands of those appointed to do so is at one and the same time the invocation of the Holy Spirit, a sacramental sign, and an acknowledgment of gifts and commitment.9

In the act of Ordination, the Church Ordains in confidence that God, being faithful to the promise in Christ, enters sacramentially into historical forms of human relationship, and draws upon those relationships for God’s purpose. Ordination is thus a sign performed in faith that the spiritual relationship signified is present in, with, and through the words spoken, the gestures made and the forms employed.10

Finally, Ordination is an acknowledgment by the Church of the gifts of the Spirit in the one Ordained, and a commitment by both the Church and the Ordinand to the new relationship. By receiving the new minister in the act of Ordination, the Church acknowledges the minister’s gifts and commits itself to be open to these gifts. Likewise those Ordained offer their gifts to the Church and commit themselves to the burden and opportunity of new authority and responsibility; at the same time, they enter into a collegial relationship with all ministers.11

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9 Adapted from BEM, Ministry para. 41.
10 Adapted from BEM, Ministry para. 43.
11 Adapted from BEM, Ministry para. 44.
II. Policies and Criteria
For The Ordering Of Ministry

A. Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

1. The Order of Ministry. The Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) comprises Commissioned Ministers and Ordained Ministers.

2. Personal Qualifications for the Order of Ministry. The church expects to find within the women and men it receives into the order of ministry:
   a. Faith in Jesus Christ, commitment to a life of Christian discipleship and nurturing spiritual practices;
   b. A sense of call to the ministry affirmed by the church;
   c. An understanding of pastoral identity;
   d. Capacity to engage in theological reflection;
   e. Strong moral character and personal integrity;
   f. Commitment to spiritual, physical and emotional wellness sufficient for healthy ministry;
   g. Care and compassion for all people with appropriate relational skills;
   h. Responsible personal financial management;
   i. Wise and generous stewardship in the use of God’s gifts;
   j. Skills and abilities necessary for the rigorous, pastoral tasks of ministry.

B. The Commissioned Ministry

1. Description: Commissioned ministry provides the Church opportunity for creativity and imagination in acknowledging the fresh work of the Holy Spirit. These ministries may include: pastors, evangelists, Christian educators, ministers of music, youth ministers, parish nurses, chaplains, bi-vocational ministers, recognized congregationally-based or non-congregationally-based community ministers, or others, where Regional nurture and authorization are deemed appropriate.
2. Common criteria of Commissioned ministry:

In order to be Commissioned ministers persons must:

- Be baptized members of a Disciples congregation in the commissioning Region and serving in a Congregationally, Regionally or Generally recognized call;
- Be recommended for Commissioning by a recognized congregation or congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), including the one in which his/her membership is held;
- Meet with the Regional Commission or Committee on Ministry (or that process which serves to function as a Commission on Ministry regardless of the name assigned Regionally) for Commissioning; and
- Comply with any other expectations of the Region.

In accepting Commissioning, the minister covenants to obey God by caring for the church, offering gifts of mind, body, and spirit to that service, agreeing to fulfill the functions of a minister, and adhering to the Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Commissioned Minister Standing authorizes one to perform ministry on behalf of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The granting of Commissioning may or may not meet all legal requirements for the performance of marriages.

Persons are Commissioned by Regions for ministry in a specific context. Change of ministry context requires Regional re-Commissioning.

3. Categories of Commissioned Ministry:

a. Commissioned Minister (Not Seeking Ordination): These are men and women who minister in a particular place for a specified period of time. Their call is context specific and is affirmed by the Region. Expectations for formation and education may be established by the Region, and may be accomplished in consultation with the calling congregation.

b. Commissioned Minister (Seeking Ordination): These are women and men serving in a Congregationally or Regionally authorized call who are under the care of a Region and involved in a specified program of study and formation in preparation for Ordination.

4. Candidacy for Commissioning
a. **Definition:** Candidacy is that period of time in which the individual who has received a call to serve a particular ministry is in preparation with the Region for Commissioning.

b. Candidacy begins when a person who has received a call from a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or a recognized non-congregational ministry applies to the Region for Commissioning.

c. **Steps for Candidacy.** The candidate shall:

1. be a member of a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation;
2. have a letter of recommendation from the congregation of which the applicant is a member;
3. complete the *Ministerial Profile*; and
4. meet with the Regional Commission on Ministry.

d. The Region shall assess the spiritual, emotional, moral, intellectual, and educational capacities of the applicant for the practice of ministry. This assessment will be accomplished through such avenues as personal interviews, letters of reference, background checks, psychological and vocational testing, consultation with congregations, and as appropriate, coordination between Regions in reciprocal relationships, and communications with educational institutions.

e. Upon approval, the Region brings the candidate under care and Commissions her/him for a particular ministry.

5. **Regional Responsibilities:** Specifically assigned to Regions are the responsibilities to:

a. establish procedures to evaluate applicants for Commissioned minister, which must include the *Ministerial Profile* and a current denominational criminal background check;

b. consult with the appropriate National Pastor/Leader of Racial Ethnic communities whenever considering a person of color;

c. bring applicants “under care”;

d. provide for their nurture;

e. provide opportunities for building collegiality with other ministers;

f. make available appropriate programs of study (such as readings, experiential learning, intensive weekend seminars, guided reflection on ministerial practice with a mentor-companion, and distance learning, etc.) in preparation for ministry;

g. authorize the designation of an applicant as a Commissioned Minister;

h. offer resources and presence of the Regional Minister or the Regional Minister’s designee for services of Commissioning;
i. oversee formation processes for candidates for Ordination;

j. encourage lifelong learning through continuing education opportunities
including training in healthy boundaries and anti-racism; and

k. establish additional requirements as desired.

C. The Ordained Ministry

1. **Description.** By Ordination the church recognizes the work of the Holy Spirit in calling particular persons to creative and imaginative servanthood in Christ; accepts their ministry in and for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and for the whole body of Christ; covenants to undergird the ministry; and grants authority to perform that ministry as a representative of the church. Ordained ministers are baptized members of a Disciples congregation.

In accepting Ordination, the minister covenants to obey God by caring for the church, offering gifts of mind, body and spirit to that service, agreeing to fulfill the functions of a minister, and adhering to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics* of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Ordained Minister Standing authorizes one to perform ministry on behalf of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Ordination may or may not meet all the legal requirements for the performance of marriages.

Historically called a ministry of word and sacrament, among others, this ministry may include pastors, educators, ecumenical leaders, recognized congregationally-based or non-congregationally-based community ministers, chaplains, pastoral counselors, and ministers who serve in the General and Regional church.

2. **Educational Requirements.** There are two educational tracks in preparation for Ordination: an apprentice track (AT) and a seminary track (ST).

- Those in the apprentice track will demonstrate competency in the 16 areas of ministerial practice by completing a program of study of at least 250 contact hours approved by the Region in which they are under care.

- Those in the seminary track will demonstrate competency in the 16 areas of ministerial practice by securing a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent from a theological school accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada or its equivalent.

Candidates for Ordination are expected to follow the seminary track, unless, in consultation with their Region, the Regional Ministry Commission determines that their economic, linguistic, vocational, or familial circumstances make the
Regardless of the educational track chosen, the church expects the women and men it ordains to demonstrate competency in the following areas of ministerial practice, listed alphabetically:

**Biblical Knowledge:** Be rooted and grounded in scripture and able to interpret and apply the scriptures in ways that are appropriate to original and contemporary contexts.

**Church Administration and Planning:** Be able to practice the principles of good administration, planning and implementing short- and long-range goals to enhance Congregational life in collaboration with teams and committees.

**Communication:** Be an effective communicator and be able to facilitate effective communication within and on behalf of the church.

**Cross Cultural and Anti-Racism Experience:** Be sensitive to the different manifestations of racism and prejudice in the culture and be committed to confronting and overcoming them.

**Ecumenism:** Exhibit a commitment to working with other Christians and denominations and with other faiths in programs of common witness and service, and to articulating the vision of the ecumenical and global church as a starting place for mission.

**Education and Leader Development:** Know the foundations of Christian education and the principles of leader development. Show competency in teaching children, youth, and adults, including lay leaders and staff.

**Ethics:** Be able to help parishioners think critically about the relationship of their faith to issues of justice, ethics and morality

**Evangelism:** Be able to motivate Congregational members to share their faith through word and action.

**Mission of the Church in the World:** Be able to understand and articulate the centrality of the call to mission given by Jesus Christ and the prophets. Be able to empower congregations to engage in mission from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth.

**Pastoral Care:** Be able to engage other persons with empathy and assess situations and relationships with the compassion of Christ, with sensitivity to culture and context. Be able to convey the healing power of God to those who suffer.
Proclamation of the Word: Know the practice and theory of Christian preaching. Be able to proclaim the Word of God, share the Good News of Jesus Christ, and help Congregational members apply their faith to daily life.

Spiritual Development: Establish and maintain spiritual disciplines that lead to personal growth and help others develop a rich spiritual life.

Stewardship: Be able to develop and encourage healthy stewards who recognize and share generously God’s abundant gifts for all creation.

Theology: Be able to articulate a coherent view of God’s nature and activity in relation to the Christian tradition, to critically engage human situations from a perspective of faith, and to help persons recognize theological issues in their daily lives.

Understanding of Heritage: Have knowledge of and appreciation for the history and thought of Christianity and of the history, structure, practices, and ethos of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Worship: Know the purpose and elements of Christian worship. Have the ability to plan and lead meaningful worship by working with the worship team, musicians, and Congregational members.

3. Regional Responsibilities:
Regions are strongly encouraged to offer an apprentice track (AT) program on their own or in collaboration with Regional Fellowships, theoretical institutions, or ecumenical partners. Those offering an AT program will submit their curriculum to the General Commission on Ministry for evaluation.

Specifically assigned to Regions are the responsibilities to:

a. establish procedures to evaluate applicants for Ordination;

b. evaluate the educational experience of candidates for an AT program which would include a high school diploma or its equivalent and some postsecondary educational experience;

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12 Regional Fellowships (Clusters) are gatherings of Regions in geographical proximity. They include: ROSES (Regions Of the Sun Equipping and Serving: Oklahoma, Southwest, and Great River); WRIM (Western Regions In Ministry: Arizona, Pacific Southwest, Northern California-Nevada, Oregon, Northwest, South Idaho, Montana, Central Rocky Mountain); SERF (SouthEast Regional Fellowship: Florida, Alabama-Northwest Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee); NIRF (Northeast Inter-Regional Fellowship: Canada, Northeast, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Capital Area, West Virginia and Michigan); HEARTLAND (Heartland Regional Fellowship: Nebraska, Kansas, Greater Kansas City, Mid-America, Upper Midwest, Illinois-Wisconsin, and Indiana).
D. Candidacy for Ordination

1. **Definition:** Candidacy is that period of time in which the individual is under the care of a Regional Commission on Ministry and involved in a specified program of study and formation in preparation for Ordination.

2. **Application for Candidacy.** Application for candidacy is entered into when a man or woman declares the intention to seek Ordination through the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and their congregation affirms that intention.

3. **The Criteria for Candidacy.** The applicant shall be a baptized member of a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation and shall make application for candidacy to the Region of the candidate's membership or to the Region where she or he is a student. In special circumstances and subject to agreement between appropriate Regional Ministers and/or Regional Commissions on Ministry, persons may apply for candidacy in another Region. The applicant shall have a letter of recommendation from a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the candidate’s Region of membership.

Upon receipt of the application, the Region will begin the process of assessing (through avenues such as personal interviews, letters of reference, background checks, psychological testing, consultation with congregations, coordination of Regions in reciprocal relationships, and communications with educational institutions), the spiritual, emotional, moral, intellectual, and educational capacities of the applicant for the practice of ministry. Upon approval of the application, the Region shall admit the applicant to candidacy. Once accepted as a candidate, the individual comes under the care and direction of the Regional Commission or Committee on Ministry (or that process which serves to function as a Commission on Ministry regardless of the name assigned Regionally).

4. **The Procedures During Candidacy.** The candidate shall seek Ordination through a discernment process established by the Region. That preparation may include authorization as a Commissioned Minister (Seeking Ordination). The candidate...
may complete the educational requirements for either track without serving as a Commissioned Minister.

Separate from candidacy, Commissioned Minister status authorizes one to perform ministry on behalf of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The granting of candidacy may or may not meet all legal requirements for the performance of marriages.

5. **Preparation for Ordination.** A candidate for Ordination is to prepare himself or herself spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and physically for her/his ministry. The following areas support and enhance the performance of an applicant’s chosen ministry:

a. Participation in the life and work of a congregation of Christians;

b. Breadth of theological study so that the candidate shows an understanding of the Christian faith, the Bible, the church universal, the history and polity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and the formation and function of Christian mission;

c. Professional and ecclesiological study plus supervised experience in the work of ministry, exhibiting competencies in that form of ministry in which the candidate hopes to serve;

d. Formation of responsible relations with and concern for the church, both as communities of faith and as institution;

e. Growth in personal character, Christian insight, spiritual formation, wellness and disciplined commitment to ministry;

f. Formation of and adherence to ethical principles to guide professional relationships and personal conduct as outlined in the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).*

6. **Conclusion of Candidacy.** Completion of a prescribed program of study (apprentice track) or the receipt of a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent from an institution of higher education accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (seminary track) does not guarantee Ordination.

Candidacy is concluded by Ordination, voluntary withdrawal by the candidate, or decision of the Region to terminate candidacy. Completion of candidacy within seven years is recommended, but may be extended at the discretion of the Region.
**E. The Act of Ordination**

Ordination is a process of the Congregational and Regional Church on behalf of the whole church to commend to Christians everywhere individuals who meet the qualifications and have fulfilled the requirements established by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for Ordination.

1. The candidate shall be recommended for Ordination by a recognized congregation or congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), including the one in which membership is held.

2. The act of Ordination shall be under the authorization and guidance of the sponsoring congregation and the Region, with the Regional Minister, or the Regional Minister’s designee, presiding.

3. The service ordinarily shall be held in a sponsoring congregation.

4. Representatives of the recommending congregation or congregations, the Regional church, the ecumenical church and, where possible, the General church shall participate in the service.

5. After the Ministerial Code of Ethics is signed, the signed Ordination document shall be issued by the Region.

**F. Ministerial Standing**

1. **Definition.** Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is credentialing for ministry within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a call to accountability to the church, and collegiality with other ministers both denominationally and ecumenically.

   a. Standing affirms that the Commissioned or Ordained minister is currently engaged in the practice of ministry, whether on an occasional, part-time or full-time basis, with continuous accountability maintained with a congregation, related organization or institution, Region, or General Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Such ministers are listed in the *Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* and may call upon the church for services and support such as pastoral care, ecclesiastical endorsement, and scholarship aid. In addition they have voting privileges in the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

   b. Ordained ministers with Standing have access to Search and Call. Candidates for Ordination may be granted access to Search and Call at the
discretion of the Regional Minister of the Region where they are under care or the Region of their educational setting.

c. Responsibility for certification of Standing of ministers and for annual review of that Standing within the Order of Ministry is lodged with the Region where the minister is currently engaged in the practice of ministry. Nothing in the Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry is intended to preclude a Region from developing additional appropriate statements or procedures pertaining to Standing within that Region as long as such statements are consistent with the Order of Ministry.

d. For those engaged in non-Regional ministries responsibility for certification of Standing and for annual review of that Standing within the Order of Ministry is lodged with the General Commission on Ministry. For purposes of this document, non-Regional ministries are defined as all ministries outside the United States and Canada, those ministries engaged by and accountable to one of the General Ministries of the church, ministries of the ecumenical church and with interfaith organizations whose responsibilities extend beyond one Region, whether in North America or abroad, and fulltime military, VA and Federal Correctional chaplaincies. All other ministries are hereby defined as Regional as determined by the primary ministry site. The General Commission on Ministry has a credentialing function but is not an Ordaining body; that is the province of Regions in cooperation with congregations. In covenant with the Regions, the General Commission on Ministry will notify Regions about persons who reside in their Region and hold Standing with the General Commission on Ministry.

e. Since Regional Ministers “serve as a sign of the ministry of the church in sacrament and service” and lead Regions in promoting “the concept of whole church, and have a primary role in advocating and supporting the denomination’s mission and vision” (Marks of a Faithful Regional Church, August, 2006), the responsibility for certification of Standing is jointly lodged with the Region where the Regional Minister serves and with the General Commission on Ministry. Annually, the Regional Minister will complete Standing forms required by both the Region and the General Commission on Ministry.

2. Certification of Standing of those Commissioned and Ordained by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

a. By virtue of Commissioning or Ordination according to the Order of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the minister becomes eligible for Standing.
b. Standing for ministers in active service continues so long as the minister does and reports the following:

i. Performs faithfully the duties of a minister as authorized by Commissioning or Ordination, either in an occupation recognized by the church as ministerial in purpose or in a service recognized by the church as ministerial in purpose.

ii. Participates regularly in programs of study, growth, and renewal.

iii. Maintains relations with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) including participating membership in a recognized congregation in the community of residence or active ministry where feasible.

iv. Adheres to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*.

v. Continues to meet the personal qualifications for admission to the Order of Ministry. (II.A.2.)

vi. Seeks annual certification as requested by the Region where the ministry site is located or by the General Commission on Ministry, as appropriate. (See II.F.1.c.)

c. Standing may be continued at the discretion of the Region or the General Commission on Ministry in cases of disability or other special hardships affecting ministerial service, so long as other criteria for Standing are met.

d. The Region or the General Commission on Ministry will provide means by which the Standing of all ministers in its care will be reviewed annually. Consultation with the appropriate National Pastor/Leader of Racial Ethnic communities is encouraged regarding the Standing of persons of color.

e. When an Ordained Minister moves from a ministry position in one Region to a ministry position in another Region, Standing in the Order of Ministry is retained. Commissioned Ministers who move to another Region must contact that Regional Minister to establish Standing in the new ministry position. Responsibility for review and subsequent certification is assigned to the Region in which the minister functions or to the General Commission on Ministry. The minister shall notify both the former and new Regional Ministers upon relocation.
f. When an Ordained Minister who is not actively seeking relocation moves from a ministry position in one Region to another Region and is no longer engaged in ministry, ministerial Standing will be provisionally retained for up to one year, except in the case of retirement, until review and subsequent certification is granted by the Region into which the minister has moved. The Ordained Minister is required to initiate contact with both the former and new Regional Ministers regarding his or her status.

3. Certification of Standing of Retired Ministers, Commissioned or Ordained by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

a. Upon retirement, Commissioned Ministers retain Standing if they continue serving in an approved ministry site. Standing of inactive retired Commissioned Ministers may be granted at the discretion of the Region.

b. Ordained Ministers with Standing retain this Standing at the time of retirement.

i. A retired minister who intends to continue practice of ministry, whether on an occasional, part-time or full time basis must continue to seek annual certification of Standing as requested by the Region where the ministry site is located or by the General Commission on Ministry, as appropriate. (See II.F.1.c.)

ii. When Standing is granted, the active retired minister will be listed in the Yearbook of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as active retired. (aR)

iii. To be eligible for such Standing, the active retired minister

   a) Performs faithfully the duties of a minister as authorized by Commissioning or Ordination, either in an occupation recognized by the church as ministerial in purpose or in a service recognized by the church as ministerial in purpose.

   b) Participates regularly in programs of study, growth, and renewal.

   c) Maintains relations with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) including participating membership in a recognized congregation in the community of residence or active ministry where feasible.

   d) Continues to meet the personal qualifications for admission to the Order of Ministry (II.A.2) and to adhere to the Ministerial Code of Ethics
iv. Retired ministers who are no longer engaging in the practice of ministry on an occasional, part-time or full time basis may seek Standing as inactive retired ministers.

a) Retired ministers who are granted inactive status will continue to be listed in the *Yearbook of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* as inactive, retired ministers (iR).

b) Inactive retired ministers must continue to seek annual certification of Standing as requested by the Region where they reside.

c) To be eligible for such Standing, the inactive retired minister must continue to adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics* and must hold participating membership in a recognized Disciples congregation in the community of residence where feasible.

v. If an inactive retired minister decides to once again take up the practice of ministry, that minister must once again seek status as an active retired minister. (See 3.c.i-iv)

4. *Suspension or Termination of Ministerial Standing.*

a. Procedures leading to a review of Standing may be initiated by the minister, the Region, or the General Commission on Ministry when one or more of the following conditions are present:

i. The minister desires to be released from the practice of ministry, either temporarily or permanently.

ii. The minister requests transfer of credentials from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to another denomination or non-Disciples congregation.

iii. The minister enters into a full-time occupation not recognized by the church as ministerial in purpose and/or no longer performs the functions of the office of a minister.

iv. The minister fails to respond to a request for annual certification from the Region or the General Commission on Ministry.

v. The minister no longer meets the personal qualifications for admission to the Order of Ministry (II.A.2.) or fails to adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics*.

vi. The retired minister fails to adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics*. 
b. When the Region or the General Commission on Ministry takes the initiative in the review of Standing, the procedures shall include:

i. Written notice to the minister that Standing is to be reviewed with the possibility of suspension or termination.

ii. Consultation with the appropriate National Pastor/Leader of Racial Ethnic communities is encouraged regarding the termination of Standing of persons of color.

iii. A hearing by a committee appointed by the Region or the General Commission on Ministry.

c. When the minister takes the initiative in the review, the procedures shall include:

i. Written notice to the Region or the General Commission on Ministry requesting that Standing be reviewed with the possibility of termination.

ii. A consultation with a committee appointed by the Region or the General Commission on Ministry.

d. Standing may be granted to a minister whose Standing has been terminated or suspended by another Region or the General Commission on Ministry only upon the recommendation of the terminating or suspending body, whether that is a Region or the General Commission on Ministry.

5. **Surrender of Standing**

When a minister surrenders Standing, Standing can be granted again only upon the recommendation of the body to which Standing was surrendered, whether that is a Region or the General Commission on Ministry. The Region or General Commission on Ministry shall address any outstanding allegations of misconduct before reinstating Standing.

6. **Lapsed Standing**

When a minister’s Standing has lapsed, Standing may only be granted after consultation with the body where the Standing was previously held, whether the Region or the General Commission on Ministry.

G. **Recognition and Reconciliation of Ordained Ministries**
1. *Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing with the United Church of Christ*

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ recognize the Ordained ministries of the other church to be efficacious ministries of grace within that church and these ministries to be valid and full ministries of the one Church of Jesus Christ.

The Ordained ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ are reconciled. An Ordained minister with Ordained ministerial Standing in one church may function, whenever invited, and as established procedures permit, as an Ordained minister of the other.

The designations "Ordained Ministerial Partner" and "Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing" manifest the corporate and individual nature of the recognition and reconciliation of the Ordained ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ.

a. Each member of the United Church of Christ who holds Ordained ministerial Standing in the United Church of Christ is an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

b. Each member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who holds Ordained ministerial Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the United Church of Christ.

c. When a person no longer has Ordained ministerial Standing in either the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or the United Church of Christ, that person is no longer an Ordained Ministerial Partner and Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is nullified.

d. *United Church of Christ ministers with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*

Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is recognition granted to an Ordained minister with Standing in the United Church of Christ who has been called to an Ordained ministry setting in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing provides ongoing ecclesiastical authorization to exercise the rights and responsibilities of Ordained ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

i. Once a United Church of Christ Ordained minister has demonstrated knowledge of and appreciation for the history, polity, and practices of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to the Regional Commission on
Ministry where the minister resides, that Ordained Ministerial Partner may be granted access to the Search and Call process in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is not given at this point in the process.

ii. A United Church of Christ Ordained Ministerial Partner who secures a call in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) applies for Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing to the Region in which the Ordained minister’s calling body is located. Once granted, Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is reviewed by the Region for certification annually.

iii. A United Church of Christ Ordained minister has Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) only when serving a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) calling body.

iv. A United Church of Christ minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall maintain Ordained ministerial Standing in the United Church of Christ.

v. Ordained ministerial Standing shall be held in the association in which the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) calling body is located.

vi. A United Church of Christ minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing shall maintain relations with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) including (where feasible) holding associate membership in a recognized Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation in the community.

vii. A United Church of Christ minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in a Region has voting privileges in the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

viii. A United Church of Christ minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall relate to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for his/her primary support in Ordained ministry.

ix. A United Church of Christ minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall be accountable to the Region for Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing and to the United Church of Christ for Ordained ministerial Standing.
x. When a disciplinary review is instituted in relation to the United Church of Christ minister holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the association of the United Church of Christ in which the United Church of Christ minister’s Ordained ministerial Standing is maintained, shall be informed and invited to participate in the procedures.

xi. When a United Church of Christ minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) accepts a call in another Region, he/she shall be subject to review and subsequent annual certification of Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing by the new Region.

e. **Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ministers with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ.**

Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is recognition granted to an Ordained minister with Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who has been called to an Ordained ministry setting in the United Church of Christ. Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing provides ongoing ecclesiastical authorization to exercise the rights and responsibilities of Ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ.

i. Once a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Ordained minister has demonstrated knowledge of and appreciation for the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ to the Association Committee where the minister resides, that Ordained ministerial partner may be granted access to the Search and Call process in the United Church of Christ. Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ is not given at this point in the process.

ii. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Ordained Ministerial Partner who secures a call in the United Church of Christ applies for Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing to the Association in which the Ordained minister’s calling body is located. Once granted, Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is reviewed by the Association annually.

iii. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Ordained minister has Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ only when serving a United Church of Christ calling body.

iv. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ shall maintain Ordained ministerial Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
v. Ordained ministerial Standing shall be held in the Region in which the United Church of Christ calling body is located.

vi. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing shall maintain relations with the United Church of Christ including (where feasible) holding associate membership in a recognized United Church of Christ congregation in the community.

vii. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in an Association has voting privileges in the Association and Conference and is eligible for election as a delegate to General Synod or election as a member of any Covenanted Ministry Board in the United Church of Christ.

viii. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ shall relate to the United Church of Christ for his/her primary support in Ordained ministry.

ix. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ shall be accountable to the Association for Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing and to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for Ordained ministerial Standing.

x. When a disciplinary review is instituted in relation to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ, the Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in which the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister’s Ordained ministerial Standing is maintained, shall be informed and invited to participate in the procedures.

xi. When a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing with the United Church of Christ accepts a call in another Association, he/she shall be subject to review and transfer of the Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing to the new Association.

2. Persons Ordained in Other Churches. Ministers Ordained by other denominations or non-Disciples congregations may be considered for recognition of Ordination and the granting of Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Provisional or temporary Standing may be granted to individuals applying for recognition of Ordination by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
Responsibility for this process is lodged in the Region except in the case of Military Chaplains stationed overseas.

a. Provisional or temporary Standing of applicants may be granted upon the fulfillment of the following requirements:

i. Consultation with appropriate officials of the denomination or congregation from which the candidate transfers.

ii. Satisfactory investigation of personal and ministerial references and a criminal background check.

iii. Filing of appropriate forms with the Region to which the applicant is applying or with the General Commission on Ministry.

iv. Provisional or temporary Standing shall be reviewed annually by either the granting Region or the General Commission on Ministry.

b. Removal of the provisional or temporary conditions for Standing may be granted by the Region or the General Commission on Ministry upon fulfillment of the following requirements:

i. Membership in a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

ii. Demonstrated knowledge and appreciation for the history, polity, and practices of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

iii. Fulfillment of the prerequisites and preparation, including educational attainment, for the Order of Ministry.

iv. One year minimum service under the supervision or mentoring of a Disciples of Christ minister with Standing.

v. Manifesting the personal qualifications for the order of ministry as listed in item II.A.2.

vi. Commitment to adhere to the Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

H. Ministerial Search and Call

1. The General Principles. Ministerial Search and Call is the term applied to the process developed to facilitate the calling of Ordained ministers who hold
Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It provides a covenantal framework within which ministers and Congregations, Regions, and General Ministries of the church can serve to build up the whole church of Jesus Christ. The Order of Ministry identifies general principles for Search and Call. The Office of Search and Call (Disciples Home Missions) administers these procedures of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

a. Freedom and responsibility are inherent in the tradition of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Congregations, Regions, and General Ministries of the church are accorded full freedom to issue ministerial calls within their own established or constitutional provisions. Ministers, likewise, are accorded full freedom to accept or reject a call to any particular service. All, however, covenant to work within the Order of Ministry in the interest of assuring an orderly and responsible system of Search and Call.

b. The Church is best served when Regional Ministers and National Pastors/Leaders of Racial Ethnic communities work together covenantally in the Search and Call process. Primary responsibility for the Search and Call process is lodged with the Regions. Regions are encouraged to consult the National Pastors/Leaders. National Pastors/Leaders may offer their counsel to the Regional Minister in Search and Call with the understanding that the primary responsibility for Search and Call lies with the Region.

2. **Operating Principles.**

   a. Ordained ministers with Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will have complete and unhindered access to Search and Call of the church.

   b. Ordained Ministerial Partners with Standing in the United Church of Christ will have complete and unhindered access to Search and Call of the church once they have been qualified by a Region to seek a call.

   c. Congregations, Regions, institutions, and General Ministries of the church will be provided assistance from the Office of Search and Call.

   d. Any *Ministerial Profile* in the Office of Search and Call will be open to the minister concerned except for confidential references for which a waiver has been signed.

   e. Confidentiality, when assured to the persons completing the reference forms, will not be violated.
f. At the discretion of the Region of care candidates for Ordination may be granted authorized access to Search and Call.

g. All candidates for Ordination with authorized access to Search and Call and Ordained Ministers with Standing may be considered for any ministerial position.

h. All candidates for Ordination with authorized access to Search and Call and Ordained Ministers with Standing shall have access to information regarding available ministerial openings in the church.

i. Every congregation, Region, educational or related institution, and General Ministry will strive to be open to the ministry of all persons putting aside prejudice and considering candidates based on gifts and skills for ministry.

3. Responsibilities. It is expected that all parties using Search and Call will abide by the established procedures of the Office of Search and Call.

a. Ministers. Commissioned and Ordained ministers with Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have the responsibility to seek the advice and counsel of the Region and to avail themselves of the resources of the Office of Search and Call. They have the freedom to accept or reject any call offered to them, and to negotiate whatever terms of call or service seem appropriate. In all matters, ministers will function within the covenantal relationship of the whole church.

b. Congregations. Within the tradition of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and according to The Design, congregations have the right and responsibility to seek and call their own leadership, to establish the terms of call, to undergird the ministry, and to effect terminations within their own procedures. In all matters, congregations will function within the covenantal relationship of the whole church and are encouraged to seek the advice and counsel of the Region/Area.

c. Regions. Regions bear the primary responsibility for providing advice and counsel to both congregations and ministers in Search and Call. Regions may delegate or share this responsibility with their areas, districts or other subdivisions. In all matters, Regions will function within the covenantal relationship of the whole church.

d. Disciples Home Missions. The Office of Search and Call at Disciples Home Missions is the primary locus of the ministerial records of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) related to Search and Call and is responsible for coordinating the Search and Call process of the church. In all matters,
Disciples Home Missions will function within the covenantal relationship of the whole church.

e. General Ministries. In all matters, General Ministries will function within the covenantal relationship of the whole church.

I. Ministerial Code of Ethics

Believing that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God, and proclaiming him Lord and Savior of the world, I reaffirm my vows as a minister. Through dedication and discipline I will lead and serve with integrity. Relying on the grace of God, I commit myself to the following:

**Personal Conduct**

- Witnessing to the ministry of Jesus Christ
- Dedicating time, strength, vitality, and energy for effective ministry
- Growing in faith, knowledge, and the practice of ministry through the spiritual disciplines, study, continuing education, and service
- Living a life that honors my commitments to my family, including the need for privacy and time together
- Taking time for physical and spiritual renewal, recreation, and vacation
- Being a faithful steward of God’s gifts to me by managing time, talents, and financial resources responsibly and generously
- Accepting responsibility for all debts that I incur
- Keeping physically and emotionally fit and refraining from substance abuse and other abusive behaviors
- Using my position, power, and authority in non-exploitive ways
- Maintaining high moral standards in my sexual behavior
- Regarding all persons with equal respect and concern and undertaking to minister impartially

**Relationships to the Church which I Serve**

- Nurturing and offering my gifts for ministry to the church
- Calling forth and nurturing the gifts of others in the church and joining their gifts with mine for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ and the health of the church
- Preaching and teaching the gospel without fear or favor and speaking the truth in love
- Administering the sacraments/ordinances and services of the church with integrity and not for financial gain
- Working cooperatively and collegially with those whom I serve in the particular ministry to which I have been called
- Administering the corporate finances of the church with personal integrity
• Refraining from accepting any gift which would compromise the church’s ministry
• Protecting confidences; covenanting to only tell those who need to know, what they need to know, when they need to know it
• Acting to prevent and to report known or suspected cases of physical or sexual abuse or neglect
• Encouraging and participating in the regular evaluation of my ministry and cooperating with the Region in the annual review of my ministerial Standing
• Seeking the counsel of the Regional Minister should divisive tensions threaten my relationship with those I serve

Relationships to Ministry Colleagues
• Engaging in covenental relationships with colleagues which involve nurture, discipline, family support, vigorous dialogue, mutual teaching/learning, and spiritual formation
• Supporting colleagues in ministry and their families while not exploiting their problems or crises
• Performing pastoral services within another congregation or for a member of another congregation only at the request of that congregation’s elders and current pastor
• Supporting and at no time speaking maliciously of the ministry of my predecessors or another minister
• Encouraging the ministry of my successor upon my retirement or other departure from a ministry position, without interfering or intruding and by making it clear to former parishioners that I am no longer their pastor, nor will I perform any pastoral services unless requested by the congregation’s elders and current pastor

Relationships to the Community and the Wider Church
• Participating responsibly in the life and work of my community, bearing prophetic witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and working towards a just and morally responsible society
• Participating faithfully in the life and work of all expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
• Seeking to know, understand, and respect the diversity of opinions and people within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
• Being a responsible representative of the one church of Jesus Christ and participating in activities which strengthen its ministry, witness, and mission

J. Misconduct

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) understands ministerial misconduct to be activity which violates the covenantal character of the ministerial office as expressed in
the Ministerial Code of Ethics. Investigation and adjudication of violations of the
Ministerial Code of Ethics shall be the responsibility of the Region through the
committee or Commission on Ministry or the General Commission on Ministry.

1. Reporting

Regions or the General Commission on Ministry will report formal actions and
decisions to remove Standing for misconduct to the Office of Search and Call,
Disciples Home Missions, and these actions will be communicated to all Regions.

2. Suspension of Standing

In extreme situations of alleged misconduct, ministerial Standing may be
temporarily suspended by the Region or the General Commission on Ministry
during the period of investigation and adjudication.

3. Sexual Misconduct

a. It is the responsibility of each Region to have specific definitions of sexual
misconduct and procedures for receiving, investigating, and adjudicating
sexual misconduct charges of ministers with Standing in the Region. Each
Region will periodically and systematically review its definitions and
procedures. It is the responsibility of the Region to communicate such
definitions and procedures to ministers and congregations within the
Region.

b. It is the responsibility of the General Commission on Ministry to have
specific definitions of sexual misconduct and procedures for receiving,
investigating, and adjudicating sexual misconduct charges of ministers
engaged in non-Regional ministries. The General Commission on Ministry
will periodically and systematically review its definitions and procedures. It
is the responsibility of the General Commission on the Ministry to
communicate such definitions and procedures to ministers, ministries, and
other organizations in the General and ecumenical church.

K. Right of Appeal

The General Commission on Ministry understands that the Right to Appeal extends to
persons who, at the time of their appeal, are subject to a decision with adverse effect
regarding Ordination, Commissioning, transfer of credentials, and/or Standing. The
General Commission on Ministry will not consider any appeal if legal proceedings are
pending or in process.

L. Amendment Process
The Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may be amended two ways:

1. By a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the General Assembly present and voting, providing such amendments shall have been regularly filed 180 days in advance of the meeting of the General Assembly and circulated among the congregations and Regions 60 days in advance of the General Assembly.

2. By a two-thirds vote of the members of the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) present and voting, providing such amendments shall have been mailed to the members of the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at least 30 days prior to the time of the vote.

Basic Policy Approved Louisville General Assembly 1971

Section II on Candidacy approved Kansas City General Assembly 1977

Section V on Ministerial Standing amended Anaheim General Assembly 1981

Section VI on Ministerial Relocation amended Des Moines General Assembly 1985

Section VII on Amendment Process amended Louisville General Assembly 1987

Section V.C. on Recognition and Reconciliation of the Ordained Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ amended Pittsburgh General Assembly 1995

Section VIII on Sexual Misconduct amended Pittsburgh General Assembly 1995

New Theological Foundations and Revised Policies and Criteria recommended to the Indianapolis General Assembly 2009 by the General Commission on Ministry

Policies and Criteria for The Order of Ministry, 2003 is an operating document of the General Commission on Ministry

Distributed by

Disciples Home Mission

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada

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WHY HAS THIS PROPOSAL COME ABOUT? (SIX REASONS.)

a. Because we lack, and are needful of, a denominational statement concerning the theological and historical underpinnings for the “ordering of ministry” - as we understand it - one that sets-forth our own “Disciples” understanding of how the order of ministry has evolved in our particular history and polity.

b. Because “unity is our polar star,” clarity about our Disciples’ ordering of ministry, and the beliefs that undergird it, are important elements in ecumenical conversation with sister communions across the life of the Church.

c. Because of the Licensed Minister’s appeal through the Nazareth Consensus we acknowledge that:
   ~ they desire a means by which those adequately prepared might be ordained;
   ~ they desire a means by which they might enjoy mobility in the circulating of their papers and references in the church’s “search and call” system;
   ~ they desire to replace the secular term of “licensed” with a Biblical-based concept of “commissioned;” and
   ~ they desire to be more highly valued as partners alongside ordained clergy within the whole order of ministry.

d. Because some Regions already provide an alternative track to ordination, other than the requisite Association of Theological School-accredited M.Div. criterion for ordination which is fully recognized and accepted across the life of this denomination, there is a need for Disciples to have a common understanding about alternative ordination processes for which allowances are made, and to provide common standards for such.

e. Because in the current milieu, we Disciples are facing many exceptional situations (e.g. the number of rural and urban congregations who can no longer afford full-time seminary-trained clergy; the number of licensed ministers who are going the second mile in their preparation/formation to provide quality leadership; the number of individuals who are by either linguistic, economic, vocational, or familial circumstances constrained from pulling-up roots and relocating for seminary - which includes a number of our effective new church pastors) we recognize the need to provide different pathways leading to ordination.

f. Because of new questions needing address and new circumstances needing our attention in this unique historical moment for the church early in the 21st century, this is an opportune time to do so in a wholistic approach to the Disciples understanding about the Order of Ministry.

WHAT IS NEW IN THIS “ORDERING” DOCUMENT?

~ A statement of “theological foundations” about our ordering of ministry - one growing out of our Disciples history and polity. (The entirety of Section One)

[Please note that this is not meant to be a complete theological statement on ministry, but only the identification of those particular theological foundations which inform our Disciples perspective about the “ordering of ministry.”]
Especially significant is our ability to identify the manner in which our threefold offices of ministry (serving, proclaiming, over-seeing) have a clear relationship to the three distinct offices of ministry in the New Testament (diaconate, presbyterate, and episcopate). (I.D.2.a & I.D.2.c.)

Updated language about personal qualifications for the Order of Ministry. (II.A.2.)

A change of language from the use of "Licensed" to "Commissioned." (I.D.1 & II.B.1.)

The description of and criteria for Commissioned Ministry. (II.B.2.)

Two categories of Commissioned Ministers - those seeking ordination, and those not seeking ordination. (II.B.3.)

Outline of the Candidacy process for Commissioned Ministers (for the candidate and for the Region) [II.B.4-5]

The processes and procedures for Ordination. (II.C.1.)

The delineation of the "Apprentice Track" [AT] and the "Seminary Track" [ST] as preparation for ordination. (II.C.2)

The educational requirements - competencies in 16 different areas of ministerial practice - are alphabetically listed for the ordination of candidates for ministry in both educational tracks - AT and ST. (The content of each of these areas will be fleshed out by a task force appointed by the General Commission on Ministry in consultation with General Minister and President) [II.C.2]

The itemization of Regional responsibilities in working with those seeking ordination. (II.C.3.)

A freshly reworked section on Candidacy for Ordination (including definition, application, criteria, procedures during candidacy and preparations for ordination) [II.D.]

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1. In general, there is much more specificity throughout the "ordering document" to provide assistance to Regional Commissions on Ministry

2. Regions will have the option about whether to utilize the alternative pathway to ordination for Commissioned Ministers - the Apprentice Track. The policy assumes that most all will do so, but does not make it a mandatory requirement for every Region to do so. (II.C.3. uses "encourage" language.)

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In the section on Standing (II.F.) there is more clarity about

- Protocol and clarification regarding jurisdictions for certifying Regional Standing (making clear which Regions have the responsibility under what circumstances); [II.F.1.c. and II.F.2.e & f]
- Clarifications regarding certification for Standing by the General Church; (II.F.1.d.)
- Good protocol in Regional and General communications with each other when working with a person of color (good two-way consultation between the Region and the National Pastor/Leader of Racial Ethnic communities); [II.F.2.d. also at lines 670, 803, 1006, 1114 and 1381]
- A new section pertaining only to retired ministry - particularly delineating the status and requirement for active retirements (serving in retirement) and inactive retirement (retired and no longer serving); [II.F.3.] and
- New wording that differentiates what happens when Standing is removed, surrendered or lapsed. (II.F.4-6)

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Nothing has been altered in Section G on "Recognition and Reconciliation of Ordained Ministries" since that is language which has been mutually adopted by previous General Assemblies of our partner denominations - the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The Ministerial Code of Ethics which once stood apart from the Ordering document, is now incorporated in Section I of the Ordering document.
DOES ORDAINING THE NON-SEMINARY TRAINED LEAD TO A LESS COMPETENT MINISTRY?

Some have opposed the ordination of licensed ministers believing that ordination has only/mostly to do with a level of education and skill development characterized by a certain period of time and work accomplished in a particular kind of educational setting. While that is certainly part of the criteria for ministry, it is clear that throughout the centuries persons with diverse levels of education in varied kinds of educational settings have been enormously effective in God's service as ordained clergy. Years and hours of preparation have not been the only criteria.

While the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will always place a premium on an informed and prepared clergy leadership, the times in which we find ourselves are clearly leading us to broaden our sense of where and how that formation for leadership can happen. In the “ordering document” there is a clear and preferential option for seminary trained leadership - wherever and however that is possible. Note the references in section II.C.2. lines 722-724.

In the historical life of the church there has always been the ordination of well-respected, broadly-authenticated and spiritually-effective persons who did not necessarily have seminary training as we know it today. The premise behind this “ordering document” is trust - faith that God can well-utilize both a SEMINARY approach and an APPRENTICE approach for ordination in this church today. A truly inclusive church must begin to live its way into ever more inclusive ways of calling forth and setting apart its ordained leadership. It is our sense that this church will actually be enlivened and blessed by providing these two tracks to ordination.

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE ENVISIONED FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY?

Prior to the General Assembly the General Board directed that the “ordering document,” the resolution for its adoption, and the accompanying “Frequently Asked Questions” be circulated across the church for reading and study.

In July 2009 the General Assembly will provide a forum on this “ordering document” for discussion and clarification.

In July 2009 the General Assembly will vote on the adoption of this “ordering document.”

If the resolution “to adopt” is affirmed:

- The church will embark on a period of time for the transitions necessary for its implementation.
- The date for implementation - the day on which the new policy becomes effective - is August 1, 2011.

During the period of transition:

- The General Commission on Ministry in consultation with the General Minister and President will immediately appoint a task group to flesh out the content expectations for the 16 areas of ministerial competency and to develop a template or model curriculum for Apprentice Track educational programs.
- The General Commission on Ministry will work with the General Church office of ministry to effect procedures to identify Ordination AT (Apprentice Track) and Ordination ST - (Seminary Track) designations on paperwork for Regions and congregations in the Search and Call process.
- Each Region will make intentional efforts to inform their ministry commission in regard to the implications of the new “ordering document” for their work and oversight of ministry.
- Regions will decide whether they (alone or in concert with other entities - II.C.3., footnote 12) will develop a Commissioned Minister Apprentice Track for Ordination. But all Regions will come under all of the other guidelines, prerequisites and implications of the “ordering document” on August 1, 2011.
- Regions will utilize the present nomenclature for clergy (“Licensed” instead of “Commissioned”) until this policy takes effect on August 1, 2011.
Regions developing an Apprentice Track will submit their specific program design to the General Commission on Ministry for evaluation and feedback.

Regions (after the completed work of the GCOM’s Task Force to develop a template for the Apprentice Track program addressing the 16 competency areas) will determine how work done in previous LICENSED MINISTRY CONTINUING EDUCATION applies to any of their present Licensed Ministers who either might be considered for grand-parenting in, or might be seeking the Apprentice Track for Ordination.

Regions will then review the status of each current Licensed minister to determine which category of Commissioned Minister is most appropriate for their designation.

The Region would revise as necessary any Regional policies to facilitate this transition.

**HOW WILL THIS AFFECT THE CURRENT PRACTICE?**

~ All Licensed Ministers will become Commissioned Ministers in August of 2011.

  If they are serving with Standing, without intent of completing the required AT competencies, they will be designated **Commissioned Ministers, not seeking ordination.**

  If they are serving with Standing and working on accomplishing the Apprentice Track requirements they will be designated **Commissioned Ministers, seeking ordination.**

  If they are serving with Standing, and working toward the seminary requirements for ordination, they will be designated **Commissioned Ministers, seeking ordination.**

~ Candidates for ordination will be designated as AT if they are working on accomplishing the Apprentice Track requirements of the Region, and ST if they are working toward a Master of Divinity degree at an ATS accredited seminary.

~ Ordained Clergy will be designated Ordained (AT) or Ordained (ST).

~ Search Committees will have the appropriate designations clearly indicated on the clergy’s Ministerial Profile.

**WHAT KIND OF PREPARATION HAS PRECEEDED THIS RECOMMENDATION?**

What you have before you is the composite outcome of six years of work. Literally thousands of man and woman hours of effort have culminated in the “ordering document” that is coming before you. This copy is Draft 11.1. Many drafts have preceded this one, none of which made their way to the General Board and then to the General Assembly. That should indicate something of the massive effort of research, study, writing, re-writing, prayer, deliberation and worshipful work that have gone into it.

In the last two meetings prior to the accomplishment of this final recommended draft, over 300 different pieces of feedback were received from laity, clergy (licensed and ordained), Regional ministry commissions, General church leadership and higher education bodies. Every single piece of feedback has been carefully considered, and for the most part incorporated into this final rewrite. Then your General Board gave it one last bit of careful scrutiny before sending forward to you, for the consideration of the General Assembly.

Still it is a living document which can, and likely will, be amended in future General Board and Assembly gatherings as new circumstances present the church in a changing time with new issues for consideration. But at the present time this comes to you as a gift - a labor incorporating the finest efforts of hundreds of people who love this church and care about its ministries.

Setting the stage for our work a special Theological Task Force compiled the data which is now reflected in Section One of the “Ordering Document.” Those who served on this Task Group included: Robert Welsh, chair; Carolyn Higginbotham, Newell Williams, Toni Bynum, John Imbler, Tom Jewell, Joyce Knauff, Janice Legg, Rick Spleth, and Carmelo Alvarez. Then the overarching compilation of the “ordering document” was assigned to and developed by the entire General Commission on Ministry comprised of Ben Bohren, Chair, Susanne Blix, Dani Loving Cartwright, Elsie Ferrer, Lari R. Grubbs, Timothy M. James, Saudandra Michael-Bowers, Howard M. Ratcliff, Donggook “John” Roh, Dan Shelton, Richard O. Sparrow. Sharon Watkins and Howard Bowers are ex-officio. Additional members of the General Commission on Ministry include the drafting team who had the primary task of writing: Richard Guentert, chair, Carolyn Higginbotham, Joyce Knauff, and Sotello Long - plus the chair of the GCOM, Ben Bohren, who met throughout with the draft team, as well.
WHEREAS, in recent years, the General Board, the General Assembly, and leaders of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have heard from Disciples throughout the church about the need for greater transparency and accountability and have acknowledged this need; and

WHEREAS, after the Chapter 11 bankruptcy of the National Benevolent Association — a general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) — the NBA Task Force appointed by the denomination’s General Board to review the bankruptcy called for “More frequent open and transparent communication among General Ministries, regions, and congregations” (NBA Task Force Report, May 8, 2006, p. 9); and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is a member of the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC) USA, whose General Assembly adopted in 1990 an open meeting policy for its General Assembly, committees, and subcommittees, and is in a process of revising said policy; and

WHEREAS, mainline denominations and ecumenical partners including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church USA, the Episcopal Church in America, and the United Methodist Church have similar open meeting policies; and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is organized on many democratic principles, and democracy relies on free access to the workings of government and to information, so much so that the federal government, as well as states and municipalities, have established “Sunshine Laws” and open meeting legislation that entitles the public and the press to attend government meetings and to obtain information about the operation of those entities; and

WHEREAS, the Disciples’ first moderator, Ronald E. Osborn, opposed the attempted closing of the 1969 General Board meeting in the face of controversy, writing later in The Disciple, “The ugly alternative to openness is getting our information from a grapevine of gossip that keeps a favored few ‘in the know’ and the vast majority in the dark”; and

WHEREAS, open and transparent communication has been essential to the building of trust and thereby essential to the health and faith of Christian communities for centuries, even as Jesus said in Luke 12:3, “there is nothing secret that will not become known.”;
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Indianapolis in 2009 — in the spirit of openness and accountability — call for the establishment and implementation of an Open Meeting Policy for the General Assembly, including its General Board, Administrative Committee, and the task forces, advisory groups, standing committees, councils, and working groups that these elected bodies may form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly, in making that call, direct the Moderator and the General Minister and President to work with the submitters of this resolution to convene a task force that would be accountable to the General Board to develop said Open Meeting Policy and return it to the General Assembly for approval in 2011; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said task force develop and propose a policy according to the principles outlined herein and recommend a process for establishing and implementing the policy to the General Board in 2011, which would then forward the policy and recommendations to the General Assembly for approval in 2011; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such a policy should be informed by the principles of open meeting policies established by other mainline denominations and the National Council of Churches, and by the basic premises of an open and democratic society, such as:

- “Open to the public” means that business is conducted in open session in a location that accommodates visitors and press, the location and date of meetings being made known prior to meetings, and material pertinent to the meeting being made available to visitors and press.

- Closed sessions should be permitted only when certain criteria are met, such as 1) the closed session is authorized by a vote of two-thirds of those present and eligible to vote; 2) the vote to authorize is taken during an open meeting and recorded in the minutes; 3) the reason for the closed session is stated publicly; 4) the closed session is limited to matters permitted to be exempt from an open meeting (suggested below); and 5) decisions made in closed session are publicly announced following the meeting.

- Subjects that may be considered in closed session should be limited to real estate matters; negotiations, when public announcements may be harmful to the negotiating process; personnel matters; pending or potential litigation or collective bargaining; deployment of security personnel or devices; presentations wherein real or apparent danger may jeopardize the life or liberty of the presenter; and the evaluation of clergy standing.

and;
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the policy that is established be interpreted liberally by the General Assembly and its legislative bodies, i.e. restraint being used in closing meetings, closing them as seldom as possible; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the resulting policy be strongly recommended to all general and regional ministries, congregations and higher education institutions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and to recognized and “other” organizations that affiliate with the denomination.

Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) — Indianapolis, IN
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) — Tucson, AZ
DisciplesWorld, Inc. — Indianapolis, IN

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT Business Item No. 0923. (Debate time: 12 minutes)
WHEREAS, the 2005 General Assembly meeting in Portland, Oregon, approved changes to *The Design* for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) (GA Resolution 0523); and

WHEREAS, *The Design* requires that the Special Rules for the General Assembly comply with the duties outlined in *The Design*; and

WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform is charged by the General Board, acting on behalf of the General Assembly, to oversee matters of governance and structure and the Standing Committee has redrafted rules for the Administrative Committee, General Board, and the General Assembly in an effort to comply with the updated changes to *The Design* and in an effort to utilize Best Practices for Non-profit Governance; and

WHEREAS, the Administrative Committee at its April 17-18, 2009 meeting and the General Board at its April 18-21, 2009 meeting have reviewed and approved changes to the Standing Rules for the Administrative Committee, the Standing Rules for the General Board, and the Standing Rules for the General Assembly and reviewed the Special Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana July 29-August 2, 2009, approve the redrafted Special Rules of Procedure for the General Assembly excluding Section 2.3 Call for Action, which is a separate business item. The redrafted Special Rules for Procedure will take effect on August 3, 2009, and direct the work and planning of the 2011 Assembly.

General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
ADOPT Business Item No. 0924. (Debate time: 24 minutes)
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6. Responsibilities of the General Board
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Introduction
The following special rules of procedure for the General Assembly define further its organization and prescribe additional procedures for the conduct of its business.

As provided in paragraph 48d of The Design for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern the General Assembly in all other cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with The Design or special rules adopted by the General Assembly.

In addition, the General Assembly may from time to time adopt standing rules as needed for the effective conduct of its business.

The General Board and its Administrative Committee shall likewise adopt standing rules for the guidance of their operations.
1. **Classification and Ordering of Business Items to be Considered by the General Assembly**

1.1. All business items to be considered by the General Assembly, except in cases of emergency, shall be received by or shall originate with the General Board.

1.2. Business items may be filed with the General Board by any congregation, region, organization with a recognized relationship, institution or general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or by the governing structure of any such body.

1.3. Business items must be received by the Office of the General Minister and President at least 180 days in advance of a meeting of the General Assembly in order to allow sufficient time for the General Board to review and refer them with appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly.¹

1.4. All business items shall be circulated among the congregations and regions by the Office of the General Minister and President at least 60 days in advance of the General Assembly.

1.5. Upon recommendation of the General Minister and President, the Administrative Committee shall determine whether each item qualifies for consideration and its classification.

1.5.1. When an item is disqualified or reclassified or combined, the Office of the General Minister and President shall notify the submitters and in the case of a resolution submitted by a congregation, the regional minister.

1.5.2. The notification shall include the Administrative Committee’s rationale.

1.6. The Office of the General Minister and President shall assist those who are considering filing business items and provide upon request guidelines and an interpretation of the classifications of business and *The Design*.

1.7. The classifications of items shall be included in the General Assembly Docket.

2. **Classification of Business Items**

2.1. **Reports**

2.1.1. Reports are summaries of ministries performed, plans for ministry, and audited financial statements of each general ministry, commission or other entity established or recognized by the General Assembly.

2.1.2. Annually the General Board shall review such reports and make whatever comments or recommendations it deems advisable.

2.1.3. In the year in which the General Assembly meets, the General Board shall forward the Reports to the General Assembly.

2.1.4. If a Report contains only an account of work done and is primarily for information, after appropriate General Assembly consideration, no action shall be required.

2.1.5. If a Report contains recommendations for action by the General Assembly or if the General Board proposes recommendations for action by the General Assembly,

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¹ Items postmarked or e-mailed with a delivery receipt requested on the 180th day before the General Assembly shall be regarded as meeting the deadline requirement.)
such recommendations shall be submitted separately as an Operational, Policy and Organizational Item.

2.1.6. When the timing of the General Assembly prohibits a General Ministry from including an audit of its financial statements in its report, such an audit shall be provided for the next meeting of the General Board. The most recently completed audit shall be provided to the General Assembly.

2.1.7. Covenantal relationships are demonstrated by annual informational reports of regions to the General Board and annual statistical reports of the congregations in the Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The reports of regions and congregations are not business items for the General Assembly.

2.2. Operational, Policy and Organizational Items

2.2.1. Operational, Policy and Organizational Items are those which establish policy, institute or revise structures, or procedures, authorize programs, approve directions or mandate actions.

2.2.2. An Operational, Policy and Organizational Item may be originated by the General Board or by any other entity eligible to file business items for the General Assembly.

2.2.3. Actions called for in Reports whether recommended by the submitter or by the General Board, shall be transmitted to the General Assembly separately as Operational, Policy and Organizational Items.

2.2.4. The General Board shall submit a substitute Operational, Policy and Organizational Item when the substance of multiple items cover the same subject.

2.2.5. The submitter of an Operational, Policy and Organizational Item shall be encouraged through guidelines provided by the Office of the General Minister and President to attach a financial estimate of the item and how the expenses will be underwritten, if adopted.

2.2.6. The General Board shall review proposed Operational, Policy and Organizational Item(s) make whatever amendments or comments it deems advisable, and refer the items to the General Assembly with recommendation for appropriate action: adopt, not adopt or refer to a designated place for further investigation.

2.3. Calls for Action: (Provisional)

A Call is an invitation of the General Assembly to the Church for action on moral, ethical or justice issues that require urgent presence and witness by the Church in all of its expressions. Action may include prayer, study, reflection, discernment and response.

Pre-General Assembly

2.3.1. A Call may originate with any congregation, region, institution of higher education, organization with a recognized relationship and/or general ministry

2.3.2. Each Call shall include:
2.3.2.1. A summary statement of the moral, ethical or justice issue proposed for action.
2.3.2.2. A rationale describing why this issue ought to be considered by the whole church, especially as it relates to the Church’s vision to be a faithful, growing church that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for justice.
2.3.2.3. Lists of resources shall be made available to the whole church to inform its consideration and action on the issue. The list of resources shall be provided by the submitting organization(s). The list of resources should include the widest possible variety of perspectives on the issue.
2.3.2.4. In the summary statement and rationale, care should be taken to present the moral, ethical or justice issue as objectively as possible, recognizing that faithful people hold divergent positions on issues.
2.3.2.5. Ecumenical perspectives shall be sought if not already included.
2.3.2.6. A Call must be submitted to the Office of the General Minister and President no later than 180 days prior to the General Assembly in which the Call could be considered.
2.3.2.7. A Call shall not be eligible for consideration if either of the two immediate previous General Assemblies has engaged a Call on the same issue, unless its content or the circumstances leading to its submission are substantially different. Moreover, according to its own judgment, the General Board may work with submitters to combine or amend Calls.

The General Board meeting prior to the General Assembly shall:
2.3.3. Select up to four (4) Calls for Action to be forwarded to the General Assembly.
2.3.4. Become the submitting organization listed on the Call for Action.
2.3.5. Refer non-selected Calls to other expressions of the church deemed to be appropriate venue for prayer, study, reflection, discernment and response; and/or provide opportunities at the General Assembly, such as workshops and after-session, to address non-selected Calls for Action as appropriate.
2.3.6. Inform the submitters in writing of Calls that are not selected including the rationale for the decision and conversation as to other places where the call to action might be explored.
2.3.7. Publicize their decisions to the Church no less than sixty (60) days before the General Assembly.
2.3.8. Include in the General Assembly docket a list containing all of the Calls that were submitted for consideration (and not voluntarily withdrawn), the submitting organization(s), and respective decision, regardless of whether they were selected for engagement by the General Assembly.

At the General Assembly
2.3.9. The 4 Calls for Action will be scheduled for engagement during the General Assembly, including but not limited to:
2.3.9.1. Presentation of the summary statement, rationale.
2.3.9.2. The reading of a Pastoral Statement from the General Minister and President as informed by the General Board discussion.
2.3.9.3. Speakers as determined by the Office of the General Minister and President and the General Assembly Program and Arrangements Committee.
2.3.9.4. Opportunities for question and answer in various formats.
2.3.9.5. Language translation(s) should be provided for the session(s).
2.3.10. The General Minister and President shall design the format and setting to engage the General Assembly in discussion, dialogue and discernment regarding each Call.
2.3.11. Calls shall be placed on the Agenda as Orders of the Day.
2.3.12. The vote of the General Assembly is to affirm or not affirm each Call as an invitation for action by all expressions of the Church. An affirmation is denoted by 2/3 of the votes.
2.3.13. Should a vote for a proposed Call for Action receive a simple majority but fail to receive a 2/3 vote of the General Assembly, the proposed Call for Action shall be referred to General Minister and President. In consultation with the General Board, the GMP shall determine if continued dialogue and research on the subject is needed.
2.3.14. The numeric and percentage results of a ballot vote shall be posted and shared with the Church.

**Following the General Assembly**

2.3.15. If the General Assembly votes to affirm a Call for Action, the General Minister and President shall write a Pastoral Letter on behalf of the General Assembly to all expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), inviting the Church to reflect, discern and respond. The letter is understood to speak to the church and not for the church.

2.3.16. The letter shall include:
   2.3.16.1. The definition of a Call for Action.
   2.3.16.2. The Pastoral statement that was presented at the General Assembly.
   2.3.16.3. The reason why it is urgent for the Church to be present and to witness to this Call.
   2.3.16.4. The summary statement and rationale as presented to the General Assembly.
   2.3.16.5. A synopsis of the General Assembly’s engagement including the numeric and percentage results of the ballot vote.
   2.3.16.6. Recommended resources for study, prayer, reflection, and response.
   2.3.16.7. Information about the how the various expressions of the Church are currently responding, including suggested actions.
   2.3.16.8. The General Minister and President shall share the letter with appropriate ecumenical and interfaith partners.
   2.3.16.9. There will be a report on the response to the Calls at the following General Assembly.
3. **Responsibilities of the Office of The General Minister and President (OGMP)**

3.1. The General Minister and President, working pastorally and collegially, may counsel to limit the number of business items, urge submitters to combine resolution on a single subject, and offer aid in the drafting of items. Regional Ministers shall be informed when resolutions are received from their regions and may be enlisted in extending interpretation and pastoral care.

3.2. Upon request the Office of the General Minister and President shall provide printed guidelines for the preparation of business items. The guidelines shall include definitions and interpretations of the classifications of business, the standing rules, and *The Design*.

3.3. The General Minister and President shall support the Administrative Committee in its preparation of the docket of business by making recommendations concerning the eligibility of items to be considered and the classification of items. Submitters shall receive appropriate and timely notification if their items are ruled ineligible or placed in classifications other than those under which they were filed and informed that appeals for final decisions may be made to the Administrative Committee.

3.4. In receiving proposed business items and following them through the processes of the Administrative Committee, the General Board and the General Assembly, the General Minister and President shall see that the identity of the group first submitting an item is preserved even if the item eventually is transmitted to the General Assembly by a different entity such as a region, a general ministry or the General Board.

3.5. The General Minister and President shall invite each submitting entity to designate a spokesperson to attend the meeting of the portion of the Administrative Committee and/or General Board in which business for the General Assembly is discussed.

3.5.1. The designated person shall attend or participate at his or her own expense.

3.5.2. Communication may occur through the use of technology at the discretion of the Moderator of the General Assembly and the General Minister and President.

3.5.3. If the entity does not send a person, the General Board through the Office of the General Minister and President shall inform the submitting organization in writing of the General Board’s decision and rationale.

3.6. At least 40 days prior to the opening of the General Assembly, the General Minister and President shall invite each submitting entity to designate a spokesperson to make the first affirmative speech when the item is placed before the General Assembly.

3.6.1. In the case of reports, the designated speaker shall summarize or supplement the printed report.

3.6.2. Submitting entities shall provide the name and contact information of the designated spokesperson including mailing address to the Office of the General Minister and President no later than 20 days prior to the opening of the General Assembly.

3.7. The General Minister and President shall recommend an order of business to the Moderators, which the Presiding Moderator shall propose to the General Assembly as the first item of business.
3.8. When a “division of the house” or counted vote is taken on a business item in a plenary session of the General Board, a responsibility of the Office of The General Minister and Presidents to record the count and report the count with the item in the General Assembly minutes.

3.9. The Office of the General Minister and President shall convene the General Assembly Program and Arrangements Task Force.

3.9.1. The Task Force shall be comprised of 10 persons or more appointed by the General Minister and President in consultation with the Moderators, and staff from the Office of the General Minister and President.

3.9.1.1. The 10 or more persons shall include the host Regional Minister(s) and at least one member from the Region hosting the next General Assembly.

3.9.1.2. The First Vice Moderator shall chair the Task Force.

3.9.2. The Task Force shall assist in the planning and preparation of the program of worship, education and business for the General Assembly as directed by the General Minister and President and the Moderators.

3.9.3. In developing the program of the General Assembly, the General Minister and President and Moderators shall consult with general ministries, regions, the Administrative Committee and other church leaders as appropriate.

3.9.4. The Office of the General Minister and President shall:

3.9.4.1. Coordinate and administer the implementation of the General Assembly including all program and mechanical preparations in the host city.

3.9.4.2. Coordinate and supervise the Local Arrangements Committees.

3.9.4.3. Execute all contracts serving the General Assembly including the coordination and subletting of space.

3.9.4.4. Survey all hotels and eating establishments contracted for use to assure compliance with General Assembly-established standards².

3.9.5. The full Task Force shall normally meet once with ongoing responsibilities being supervised by the staff of the Office of the General Minister and President, the Moderators of the General Assembly and meetings of Task Force sub-groups.

3.9.5.1. Staff members of the Office of the General Minister and President with responsibilities for program arrangements, promotion and interpretation shall attend Task Force meetings.

3.9.5.2. Regular reports on General Assembly planning and preparations shall be made to the Administrative Committee.

4. Responsibilities of the General Minister and President and the Moderators of the General Assembly

4.1. Prepare the agenda for the General Assembly to be approved by the Moderators, including scheduling “orders of the day”.

4.2. Determine appropriate classification of business items.

4.3. Work with the Administrative Committee in the event of an appeal of the classification.

² See the Office of the General Minister and President’s Event Planning Manual.
4.4. Work with ministry partners to provide the General Board with educational material regarding General Assembly business items.

5. **Responsibilities of the Administrative Committee of the General Board**
   5.1. Receives and reviews all business items on behalf of the General Board including communication with the submitting organizations.
   5.2. Forwards recommendations regarding Reports and Operational, Policy and Procedure business items to the General Board including debate times (12, 24 or 48 minutes) and other actions as needed for approval by the General Board.
   5.3. Receives and makes final decisions concerning appeals regarding eligibility of business items or classification of business items.

6. **Responsibilities of the General Board**
   6.1. All business items for consideration by the General Assembly, except in cases of emergency, shall originate with or be presented to the General Board.
   6.2. The General Board shall review the recommendations of the Administrative Committee and present a docket of business to the General Assembly including: recommendation(s) for appropriate action and designation of the length of time for debate (12, 24 or 48 minutes).

7. **Business Rules for the General Assembly**
   7.1. The General Assembly shall receive all business items submitted to it by the General Board, consider their comments and recommendations, and after appropriate discussion and debate, take action.
      7.1.1. Action on Reports: received by virtue of inclusion in the Docket of the Assembly; no action is required. The General Assembly shall allow the time designated by the General Board for presentation and discussion of each report.
      7.1.2. Action on Operational, Policy and Organizational Items:
          7.1.2.1. Adopt or not adopt,
          7.1.2.2. Commit to the Administrative Committee for revision and reported back to the current General Assembly, as feasible;
          7.1.2.3. Commit to the Administrative Committee for designation to the appropriate body or further investigation and reported to the ensuing General Board.
   7.1.3. A Call for Action
      7.1.3.1. The General Assembly shall vote to issue or not issue the Call. A vote to issue is an affirmation of the rationale and the matter as relevant to the Church.
      7.1.3.2. A counted vote with percentage results shall be distributed to the General Assembly and the Church.

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3 Section 2 of this Document defines business items
4 Paragraph 44 of *The Design*
7.2. The introduction of a business item, properly presented by the presiding Moderator, shall be regarded as the main motion and does not require a second, since the motion originated with a group.

7.2.1. After the business item’s introduction and allotted debated time, the action of the assembly is on the main motion and not on the recommendation of the General Board, except when the General Board’s recommendation is to refer for further investigation, which is a subsidiary motion. 

7.2.1.1. If the motion to refer fails, the original business item is immediately brought to the floor of the General Assembly.

7.2.1.2. The General Board shall prepare a contingent recommendation to adopt or not adopt the original item in case the motion to refer fails.

7.2.2. The Administrative Committee shall be limited to the same recommendations as used by the General Board as listed in Section 7.1 of these rules.

7.3. Amendments are not permitted from the floor. A person desiring to amend an item may request that the item be committed to the Administrative Committee, serving as the Committee on Reference and Counsel, for consideration of amending and reporting back to the current General Assembly. When time does not permit for an item to return to the General Assembly, the item shall be assigned to the General Board.

7.4. New business may not be initiated at the General Assembly except for an emergency item.

7.5. When the General Board presents a substitute business item to the General Assembly, the following procedures shall apply:

7.5.1. The moderator shall recognize a member of the General Board to speak in support of the substitute business item.

7.5.2. The moderator shall recognize a representative of the group or organization submitting the original business item.

7.5.3. If a substitute business item fails, the original item comes immediately to the floor of the General Assembly. The General Board shall have a contingent recommendation prepared.

7.5.4. If a substitute business item is replacing multiple business items on the same subject and fails, the originals come before the General Assembly in the order in which they were received by the Office of the General Minister and President.

7.6. A proposed order of business shall be published, including all Orders of the Day, and is the first business item to be presented to the General Assembly for action.

7.7. A motion to receive all General Ministry reports as a group shall be ruled out of order unless the allotted time has passed for discussion and review of all reports. Similarly, a motion to receive a single Report without allowing the designated time for discussion shall be ruled out of order.

7.8. The total time for debate

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5 See General Assembly Special Rules 7.13.
6 Paragraph 45 of The Design.
7 A substitute item of business is defined as the General Board creating a new business item based on a resolution submitted by another organization.
7.8.1. Shall be set by the Administrative Committee and reviewed by the General Board.
7.8.2. Shall govern the debate on any given business item.
7.8.3. May be changed by the presiding Officer with the approval of the assembly.
7.8.4. May be changed by the assembly.
7.9. Each person with floor privileges\(^8\), when recognized by the presiding Officer, may speak to each business item and debatable motion once and for no more than 3 minutes, and may speak again only if all other persons desiring to speak to the motion have had the opportunity within the total time for debate.

7.10. The length of time allotted to each speaker may be reduced by motion and approval of the assembly.
7.10.1. The reduction does not apply to the designated spokesperson\(^9\).
7.10.2. In the event a substitute resolution fails and an original resolution is brought to the floor, the designated spokesperson representing the original motion shall also be allowed 3 minutes.

7.11. If there is a desire to close debate, the following procedure should be used: The chair shall receive the motion, "I move the previous question." When that motion has been seconded and carried by a two-thirds majority, the presiding Officer shall immediately put the main question without debate.

7.12. When the debate is closed:
7.12.1. On a Report, no action is required.
7.12.2. On an Operational, Policy and Organizational Item, it is recommended that the presiding Officer shall say: "The question is on adoption of Business Item No. ____ entitled ____. All those who are in favor of adopting Business Item No. ____, say yes. All those who are opposed, say no." Following the vote it is recommended that the presiding Officer shall say: "The yeses have it and the business item is adopted" or "the noes have it and the business item is not adopted." When a counted vote is taken, the results shall be recorded in the General Assembly minutes.
7.12.3. In a recommendation to refer, it is recommended that the presiding Officer shall say: "The question is on the recommendation of the General Board (or Administrative Committee) to refer Business Item No. ____ entitled ____ to ____ for further investigation. All those who are in favor of referring the business item, say yes. All those who are opposed, say no." Following the vote it is recommended that the presiding Officer shall say: "The yeses have it and the business item is referred" or "the noes have it, the business item is not referred, and it now comes to the floor of the assembly for action."

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\(^8\) Paragraphs 38 a-d of The Design.

\(^9\) See 3.5 and 3.6.2 of the Special Rules for the General Assembly.
7.13. In general, the basic rules of parliamentary procedure as described in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall be followed. The following motions, for instance, are in order, the first taking precedence over the second, the second over the third, and so forth.
7.13.1. To adjourn
7.13.2. To take a recess
7.13.3. To raise a question of privilege
7.13.4. To call for orders of the day
7.13.5. To rise to a point of order
7.13.6. To withdraw a motion
7.13.7. To close debate (move the previous question)
7.13.8. To limit or extend time for discussion and debate
7.13.9. To postpone discussion to a certain time
7.13.10. To commit
7.13.11. The main motion

7.14. Additional notes on motions
7.14.1. "Privileged" or "incidental" motions are 7.13.1-7.13.6
7.14.2. Motions subsidiary to main motion are 7.13.7-7.13.11
7.14.3. Debatable motions are 7.13.9-7.13.11
7.14.4. The following cannot be amended: 7.13.1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7.14.5. The following do not require a second: 7.13.3, 4, 5, 6
7.14.6. The following may interrupt a speaker: 7.13.3, 4, 5
7.14.7. Simple majority votes carry, except for a two-thirds affirmative vote required for 7.13.7 and 7.13.8

8. Procedure for Amendment
8.1. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the voting members of the General Assembly present and voting, a quorum being present, shall be required for any subsequent amendments. ¹⁰
8.2. Any proposed amendments shall be circulated in advance as regular business items of the General Assembly.

¹⁰ Paragraph 46 of The Design.
WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) honors the individuality and diversity of its various members and expressions of church; is called by God throughout its membership to be a movement for wholeness; and is called to address various issues of a moral, ethical and/or justice nature; and

WHEREAS, the Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) states:

37. The general representative body of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall be the General Assembly. In all of its worship, deliberation, and ministries, the General Assembly shall seek to manifest the wholeness and unity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) within the one Body of Christ; and

WHEREAS, several methodologies have been tried over the last forty years to address issues of a moral, ethical and/or justice nature with varying degrees of effectiveness, often ending with contention and strife amid our own part of the Body of Christ rather than fostering new growth in faith or witness; and

WHEREAS, the purposes of General Assembly resolutions have been misinterpreted and misreported by members of media and the general public; and

WHEREAS, the act of voting on controversial issues has received more attention than the process of learning about and discerning what God may be calling Disciples to do in our various settings in response to various moral, ethical and/or justice issues; and

WHEREAS, an average of ten Sense of the Assembly resolutions have come for action over the past two biennia, each allowing only a few speakers on either side of the issue to speak for no more than three minutes prior to a vote of the Assembly, often addressing the General Board’s recommendation regarding the original submission itself, further limiting the actual discussion on a moral, ethical or justice issue; and

WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform was commissioned by the Administrative Committee of the General Board to consider the effectiveness of Sense of the Assembly Resolutions; and

WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform began this work by asking the question “what does it mean to speak to, for and within the church and society” and was empowered by the concept of partnership, accompaniment, and critical presence; and
WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform defined a Call for Action as an invitation of the General Assembly to the Church for action on moral, ethical or justice issues that require urgent presence and witness by the Church in all of its expressions; and

WHEREAS, action may include prayer, study, reflection, discernment and response; those activities and roles will vary according to the context in which Disciples are called to serve, and

WHEREAS, all parts are necessary for the proper working of the body such that it builds itself up through love and is able to be effective in the work of ministry (Eph 4:11-16); and

WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform found Galatians 5 helpful as a test for how the Assembly could deal with these hard issues while in accord with the Spirit (5:22-23) as opposed to dealing with them in ways that foster sinful and broken human nature (5:20); and

WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform knows that no solution will be perfect nor will it meet everyone’s needs, we also sense that it is a kairos moment to define a new way of addressing moral, ethical and/or justice issues at our General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Call for Action addresses the process for submission of issues; provides for the selection and adoption of up to four Calls to be submitted to the General Assembly by the General Board; suggests ways in which the General Assembly would engage more fully with the four issues over three days; and provides for a vote on whether each call for action would be sent from the General Assembly to the whole church for appropriate consideration and action; and

WHEREAS, paragraph 45 of The Design provides for the introduction of emergency items of business at a General Assembly;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the standing rules for the General Assembly regarding Items for Reflection and Action, Study Documents and Sense of the Assembly Resolutions be replaced with the following “Call for Action”; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that this be considered provisional for the General Assembly meetings in 2011 and 2013, with evaluation by the General Board in 2012 and 2014 so that a decision on adoption or further adaptation can be presented to the General Assembly in 2015.

The General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
ADOPT Business Item No. 0925. (Debate time: 24 minutes)
REPORT OF THE GENERAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE
For Officers of the General Assembly
ELECTED by the General Assembly

For Moderator

Larry Brown has celebrated his faith as a member of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Chickasha, Oklahoma, since 1979. This congregation is a vital source of love and nurturing to the community it serves and his family’s closest friendships have come from within this wonderful congregation. He has held several leadership positions in this church, serving as Moderator, Committee Chair and Elder.

In addition to serving the local church, Larry has served the Regional Church of Oklahoma as its Regional Moderator, Chairperson of the 2002 Miracle Day, and Chairperson of the Annual Fund. Larry has served the General Church as a member of the General Board, Administrative Committee, Nominating Committee, and most recently the Search Committee for the OGMP which resulted in the selection of Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins for that office. He is currently on the Board of Trustees for Phillips Theological Seminary.

Larry and Diana, the love of his life, have been married for 41 years and are the proud and blessed parents of four married daughters, Dayna, Julie, Amy and Christi and five grandchildren. In 1987 Larry founded Midwest Towers. He is currently the President and has transformed it into an employee owned company. He is a graduate of the University of California at Davis with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. Larry brings his spirit, integrity, and work ethic to serve God's church, his family, and many friends.

For First Vice Moderator

Juan Rodriguez was born in Puerto Rico, raised in New York City, and grew up in Indiana. He has served in Northwest Indiana as a minister since 1981. His principal involvement these past 28 years has been as the organizing Pastor of a predominantly Latino multi-cultural congregation which has become a growing urban ministry center seeking to serve the diverse community of Hammond, Indiana.

Juan has a passion for building community and believes that openness and respect go far toward insuring that individuals feel safe to learn, grow and serve. He is known for speaking the truth in a spirit of love. Juan is a strong partner, working for collaboration of church-wide ministries. Juan most recently served on the 21st Century Vision Team.

He has been married to Sonia Colon, a powerful Latina Disciple leader, for 37 wonderful years and share life with Rico the “wonder dog”. Juan’s grandfather, Tomas Rodriguez, and his father, Bernardo Rodriguez, were lay Disciple preachers in Puerto Rico and New York. His childhood church home was Primera Iglesia Discipulos de Cristo en Brooklyn.

For Second Vice Moderator

Marilyn F. Williams is from Raleigh, North Carolina, where she is a member of Covenant Christian Church in Cary, North Carolina. Marilyn is active in Disciples Women’s Ministry serving as a member of International Disciples Women Ministry Executive Committee and as 2nd vice-president elect for the National Convocation Women’s Ministry.

Marilyn currently serves as the Vice-moderate elect for the region of North Carolina. She is a lay minister, graduate of Lay Academy Religious Studies from Barton College, Wilson, NC. Marilyn has served in many leadership roles for women’s ministries local, regional and national. She was the facilitator for the Women’s Well at the 2003 General Assembly in Charlotte, NC. As a Registered Dental Hygienist, she works towards the same goal. Saving Teeth and Saving Souls.

Marilyn is the second oldest child of J.O. and Ida Williams. She has two grown children and four grandchildren. She loves reading, singing, dancing, traveling and meeting people, and her greatest joy and pastime is her grandchildren.
For membership on the General Board
January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2013
(Nominated from the General Nominating Committee)

Bob Alvarez, Hispanic, Layman, (50-60), Georgia
Mark Anderson, White, Layman, (40-50) Greater Kansas City
Ely Bulness, Hispanic, Clergywoman, (30-40) Great River Region
Daisy Chambers, Black, Laywoman, (70-80) North Carolina
Sharon Fields, Black, Clergywoman (50-60) Kentucky
Tamara Nichols-Rodenberg, White, Clergywoman, (30-40) Pacific Southwest
Jacque Nicolas, Haitian, Clergyman, (30-40) Florida
Kimberly Perring, White, Laywoman, (18-23) At Large
Sylvia Tisnado, Hispanic, Clergywoman, (30-40) Arizona

Of the persons being nominated:

2 are laywomen
2 are laymen
4 are clergywomen
1 clergyman
6 are racial ethnic persons
(2 African Americans, 3 Hispanics, 1 Haitian)
1 is 22 or younger

NEW MEMBERS FOR THE GENERAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE
Nominated from the Administrative Committee of the General Board

For election through the 2013 General Assembly

Hanna Arambel (At Large) W, L, F
Eleanor Demus (IL/WIS) B, L, F
Lian Jiang (SW) A, C, M
Hilda Robles (FL) H, L, F
Lorenzo York (OH) B, C, M

Of the five-person class of 2013:
3 are laywomen
2 are clergymen
4 are racial ethnic persons (2 African Americans, 1 Hispanic, 1 Asian)

Continuing members of the General Nominating Committee through the 2011 General Assembly include:

Luis Ferrer (IN) H, C, M
Bob Pulliam (GRR) W, L, M
Amy Piatt (CRM) W, C, F
Brenda Etheridge (MI) B, L, F

Of the five-person class of 2011:
1 is laywoman
1 is layman
1 is clergywoman
2 are clergymen
2 are racial ethnic persons (1 African American, 1 Hispanic)

In keeping with The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the members of the Corporation of the Division of Disciples Home Missions and the Corporation of the Division of Overseas Ministries were elected by the General Board at its April 2009 meeting. They are reported here to comply with the Bylaws of the two divisions:

DISCIPLES HOME MISSIONS
The General Board elected the following persons in the

Class of 2015:
David Geenen (IL/WI) C,W
Alan Hilberg (PSW) C,W
Lee Parker (VA) C,W
KK Wiseman (TN) C,W
One Member Yet To Be Determined

**Class of 2013:**
- George Crawford (NW) L, B
- Janet Fountain (CAN) L,W
- Jim Hockman (SC) L, W
- Norwedia Roberts (GRR) L,B
- Jean Vandergrift (NOEAST) C, W

**Class of 2011:**
- Janet Casey Allen, (IN) C,A
- Paul Few, (NEB) L,W
- Marilyn Fiddmont, (SW) C, B
- Rebecca Littlejohn (AL/NWFL) C,W
- Madelyn Logan (VA) L, W
- William McConnell (KS) C, W

**DIVISION OF OVERSEAS MINISTRIES**

The General Board elected the following person to the class of 2011
Carlos Cardoza Orlandi (GA) C, H

The General Board elected the following person to the class of 2012
Don Sherman (FL) L, W

The following persons are continuing members:

**Class of 2012**
- Bonnie Carenen (IL-WI) L, W
- Danny Stewart (MIDAM) C, W
- Carol Nichols (GKC) L, W
- Ester Lee (SW) L, A

**Class of 2011**
- Garry Sparks (IL-WI) C, W
- Sara Laroche (SW) L, W
- Linda McCrae (IN) C, W
- Eugene James (MI) C, B

**Class of 2010**
- Zachary Baird (OH) L, W
- Angel Guardiola (GA) L, H
- Daisy Chambers (NC) L, B
- Nedella Foster (OK) L, B
- Kathy Parker (CRM) L, W

**Class of 2009**
- Donald Gillett (KY) C, B
- Martin Hernandez (FL) L, H
- Tabitha Knerr (IL-WI) L, W
- Daniel Lauer (OR) L, W
- Virzola Law (TN) C, B
NO. 0927

(OPTIONAL BUSINESS ITEM)

REPORT OF THE TIME AND PLACE COMMITTEE

The 2013 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be held in Orlando, Florida, July 13 – 17, 2013.

General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT Business Item No. 0927. (Debate time: 12 minutes)
NO. 0928

(OPERATIONAL BUSINESS ITEM)

CHANGE IN REGIONAL BOUNDARIES

WHEREAS, Farmington, New Mexico relates to the Southeast corner of Colorado in terms of culture, commerce, education, recreation and is part of the “Four Corners” marketing and tourism area; and

WHEREAS, Farmington, New Mexico is located fourteen hours from the Regional Office of the Christian Church in the Southwest, and 7.5 hours from the Tres Rios Area office, it is 8 hours from the Regional Office of the Central Rocky Mountain (CRMR); and

WHEREAS, the camp used by CRMR in Colorado Springs is closer than the Tres Rios camp in Carlsbad, and relationships between the youth, women and leaders of Bethany Christian Church of Farmington, New Mexico, have grown over the past two years with CRMR where they had not in the past made the drive to be as active in Tres Rios area activities; and

WHEREAS, The Design states:

22. Regions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) perform within their established boundaries the function of the church related to their two-fold purpose of mission and nurture:
27. Identifiable geographic, cultural, sociological, and political factors provide boundaries, which the church may use to establish its own regional structures
   (1) by which the church carries out regionally its ministry of mission and nurture;
   (2) in which congregations and ministers find their primary relationships of mutual support and encouragement;
   3) which provide opportunities for regional fellowship, worship, and assembly for the consideration of matters of mutual concern;
   4) which help to relate the three expressions of the church - congregational, regional, and general - to one another in the functioning of the whole church; and

WHEREAS, the official board of the Bethany Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) voted to affiliate with the Central Rocky Mountain Region on December 3, 2008 and the congregational vote was unanimous on December 7, 2008; and
WHEREAS, the Executive Committee of the Regional Council of the Christian Church in the Southwest voted unanimously to honor this request in its meeting on December 23, 2008; and

WHEREAS, the board of the Central Rocky Mountain region voted unanimously to honor this request and change its regional boundaries accordingly in its meeting in April of 2009; and

WHEREAS, affirmation of regional and area life and ministry in the Christian Church in the Southwest illustrated that the desire to affiliate with the Central Rocky Mountain Region comes from the congregations desire to enhance its primary relationships of mutual support, encouragement, and relationship with all expressions of the church; and

WHEREAS, The Design also states:

29. In the development of any new regional boundaries, existing regional organizations shall remain intact, subject to modification by mutual consent of the regions involved, in the light of the corporate judgment of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as expressed through the General Assembly. The process of reshaping regional boundaries (even if only one congregation is affected) includes the participation and approval of the parties involved, the Administrative Committee, the General Board, and the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, this request was presented to and affirmed by the Standing Committee on Renewal and Structural Reform at its meeting February 27-28, 2009 in Dallas, Texas;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the regional boundaries of the Christian Church in the Southwest and the Central Rocky Mountain Region shift such that San Juan County, New Mexico be included in the Central Rocky Mountain Region; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the Administrative Committee and the General Board include in its operational business items for the General Assembly this change in regional boundaries.

General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT Business Item No. 0928. (Debate time: 12 minutes)